



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

MANDER PORTMAN WOODWARD COLLEGE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

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Mander Portman Woodward College

Full Name of College	Mander Portman Woodward College
DfE Number	207/6363
Address	Mander Portman Woodward College 90-92 Queen's Gate London London SW7 5AB
Telephone Number	020 7835 1355
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Email Address	enquiries@mpw.co.uk
Principal	Mr Steven Boyes
Chair of Governors	Dr Nigel Stout
Age Range	13 to 19+
Total Number of Pupils	514
Gender of Pupils	Mixed
Numbers by Age	13-16: 27 17-18: 437 19+: 50
Inspection dates	15 Oct 2013 to 18 Oct 2013

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in November 2007.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website www.legislation.gov.uk. Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, although inspectors comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

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 in the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching their judgements.

Both Ofsted and ISI inspect and report on the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, they apply different frameworks and have different criteria for judging school quality that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. Both use a four point scale when making judgements of quality but, whilst the ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by Ofsted, they also reflect the differences in approach. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement on each aspect of the school's work at the beginning of each section. **These headline statements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory', and where Achievement is 'exceptional' that term may be used for the top grade.** Elsewhere in the report, inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. **For EYFS registered provision (for pupils aged under three), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'satisfactory' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.**

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

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Miss Rachael Allen

Mr Graham Best

Mr Richard Lynn

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Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Head, ISA school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Mander Portman Woodward College is an independent co-educational day school for students aged 13 to 19. The college aims to encourage students to have high academic aspirations and to work in partnership with parents to encourage the qualities needed to achieve those aspirations; to provide a broad and flexible curriculum that allows bespoke programmes of study; to assist students to achieve high academic success; to provide a pastoral system that recognises the personal and emotional challenges faced by the students; to assist students to make informed choices about higher education and careers and maximise their chances of securing places on prestigious courses; and to provide a friendly and informal environment in which students are encouraged to develop personal discipline and values.
- 1.2 The college is part of the Mander Portman Woodward Group (MPW), which operates other colleges in Birmingham and Cambridge. The governing body of MPW oversees the running of all three colleges. Since the previous inspection a new principal has been appointed.
- 1.3 The college was founded in 1973, originally offering small group tuition for entrance to universities with demanding entry requirements, and A-level retakes. It now offers a full suite of A-level and GCSE courses; the majority of students are engaged on two-year A-level courses.
- 1.4 The college moved to its present site in Queen's Gate, South Kensington in 2000. At the time of the inspection there were 514 students on roll; boys slightly outnumber girls. Students come from a wide socio-economic and ethnic background and a large proportion transfer from independent schools in the London area. Just over a quarter of the students are of a nationality other than British and a substantial proportion of these have previously been educated overseas.
- 1.5 The college is academically non-selective with a broad range of abilities evident. There are 125 students who have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). All these students receive additional support. There are 146 students for whom English is an additional language (EAL). Additional support is given to 77 of these. One student has a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.8 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Students are very well educated and the college successfully fulfils its aims. The quality of the students' academic achievement and progress throughout the college is excellent. The provision for and achievement of those students with SEND or EAL is excellent and the provision for able gifted and talented (AGT) students is good. The academic curriculum is broad and flexible timetabling allows individual programmes of study to be developed. The contribution of teaching is excellent. Small class sizes throughout the college enable students to receive individual attention; tutors give freely of their time to support students outside the classroom. The extra-curricular programme gives good opportunities for those students who wish to participate. Students have an excellent attitude to their learning and this makes a significant contribution to their achievement and progress.
- 2.2 The quality of the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. In line with the aims of the college, students are encouraged to develop confidence, self-belief and self-discipline. The students are courteous, friendly and considerate. Pastoral care, demonstrated in the relationship between students and between staff and students, is excellent. Students feel safe in the college environment and they have a choice of people to go for support or help if they have any concerns. Arrangements to ensure their welfare, health and safety are excellent.
- 2.3 Governance is excellent and the members of the board fully discharge their responsibilities. They are rigorous in monitoring safeguarding procedures as well as the effectiveness of policies. Leadership and management at all levels are excellent and good practice is shared at both departmental and whole college levels. The college has effective links with parents. The recommendations from the previous report have been implemented.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The college meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.5 The college is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Improve provision for AGT students still further to ensure that students receive a sufficiently high level of challenge at all times.
 2. Include more provision for physical activities for girls in the extra-curricular programme.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

3.(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning

- 3.1 The quality of the students' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 Students are very well educated, in accordance with the aims of the college. They show high levels of knowledge and understanding across a broad and dynamic curriculum, and demonstrate skills at the highest level in both their academic and extra-curricular activities. Students develop a breadth of skills and good levels of achievement in a broad range of subjects. They demonstrate strong speaking and listening skills, are confident and articulate, express themselves with maturity and listen sympathetically and empathetically.
- 3.3 Students enjoy a variety of successes both academically and collectively, for example in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE), mathematical Olympiad results, examination commendations and in sport and drama. A wide variety of excellent artwork is displayed around the college. Students have also gained success in the awards made by the professional association of English independent sixth-form colleges.
- 3.4 Students in all parts of the college, including the AGT and those with SEND or EAL, show excellent achievements in literacy and numeracy in lessons and in their written work. Students have high levels of information and communication technology (ICT) skills. They respond well to the high-quality teaching with well-developed learning skills. At all stages students show confidence in their own learning and evidence of this was seen in many lessons.
- 3.5 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2010 to 2012. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are available. Results at GCSE have been good in relation to the national average for maintained schools. These levels of attainment, confirmed by inspection evidence including scrutiny of the students' work and interviews with students indicate that they make excellent progress. Excellent support enables those students with EAL or SEND to participate fully in lessons and these students demonstrate equivalent levels of achievement in relation to their peers and make excellent progress.
- 3.6 Results at A-level have been good and above the national average for maintained schools and similar to the national average for maintained selective schools. Standardised measures indicate that positive progress is made in the sixth form. A high proportion of students move on to higher education many gaining places at universities with demanding entry requirements, thus fulfilling one of the college's aims.
- 3.7 A highly significant factor in the students' progress is their excellent attitude to their work, to their tutors and to the college. Engagement in lessons is mature and focused, students organise their work well and settle to work quickly. In the overwhelming majority of teaching, students are engaged and show excellent behaviour. Students' enjoyment of their academic life was evident frequently. The students are confident and highly productive learners, keen to share their ideas with one another through discussion and group work, often deriving inspiration from the contributions of their peers. The students take responsibility for their work and co-operate with their tutors.

3.(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular activities is excellent.
- 3.9 The curriculum offers an extensive range of subjects with a flexible timetable and programmes of study tailored to suit individual students. Students in Year 10 study biology, chemistry and physics separately and in Year 11 they may elect to take one, two or three of them as separate subjects. Year 10 students study a curriculum of 12 core subjects and Year 11 students have a core of 6 subjects plus 2 options chosen from a range of subjects. The curriculum is appropriate and covers all the required areas of learning and fulfils the college's aims well. The provision for those students with SEND and EAL is excellent and enables them to achieve at the same level as other students. The provision for AGT is good and includes courses to enable early entry for examinations, opportunities to undertake additional courses and to develop particular talents in extra-curricular activities. However, the provision does not always allow these students to work with a sufficiently high level of challenge.
- 3.10 Since the previous inspection personal, social and health education (PSHE) has been introduced into the curriculum in Year 12 and IGCSE separate science courses for Year 11 students. Opportunities in ICT have developed well across the college, with individual subject micro-sites created and podcasts used to help students with their revision. Careers education is provided through PSHE. Students are supported and guided by staff with considerable expertise in careers guidance and university applications. There is an area of the library dedicated to careers. Some students take part in work experience during holiday periods. An annual careers week takes place in the college and external speakers from universities are regularly invited to talk to sixth-form students.
- 3.11 The college provides a high number of enrichment opportunities for students. A travel fund allows students to visit many places of interest and the curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of educational visits such as geography field work and visits to law courts. A newly introduced and well-attended lecture series covers a wide range of topics, such as the role of China in the world.
- 3.12 The college has established good links with the wider community. Local schools attend careers lectures. The college holds an annual carol service at a local church, and hires a local gallery to hold art and photography exhibitions.
- 3.13 In the pre-inspection questionnaires a very small minority of students and parents felt that the college did not provide a good range of extra-curricular activities. Inspection evidence showed that since the previous inspection there has been a significant improvement in the number and range of extra-curricular activities offered to the students, and this provision is now good. This meets the recommendation of that inspection. The range includes tennis, badminton, rugby and a debating society. Opportunities for girls in physical pursuits are still limited. The current college production has been well received by the students. The DofE scheme is offered to all students and all of Year 10 complete the bronze award.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.14 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.15 Teaching is highly successful in promoting the students' progress and in supporting the aims of the college. Small teaching groups and the very good understanding of the needs of individual students evident in teaching enable excellent progress to be made.
- 3.16 The college's high expectations of the standards of marking and assessment achieved in teaching are made very clear and almost without exception they are met. Diagnostic marking of the students' work helps support the continual focus on assessing what improvement is needed to ensure progress and the use of well-defined objectives in marking has a positive impact on learning. Marking is regularly reviewed internally at both departmental and whole college level. Excellent use is made of the vast range of information gained from assessments to inform teaching and monitor the students' progress. In the pre-inspection questionnaires, the vast majority of students responded that tutors and homework assignments help them learn.
- 3.17 Outstanding subject knowledge is evident in teaching and considerable expertise supports student learning. There is a clear strategy and direction in ensuring that ICT aids teaching. Excellent use of the available resources is made at all times.
- 3.18 Nearly all teaching focuses on enabling the students to fulfil their potential and achieve high standards. The wide variety of teaching styles used meets the recommendations of the previous inspection. Material to offer extended challenge to AGT students is developed within departments, and in nearly all teaching, students are encouraged to think independently. In the very small amount of teaching where this is not consistent progress is hampered by lack of challenge. The most successful teaching fosters independence and allows rapid progress to be made through careful planning. In pre-inspection questionnaires the majority of students indicated that they were encouraged to do things for themselves and to work independently.
- 3.19 Pupils with SEND or EAL are extremely well supported. In interviews students articulated their appreciation for the level of support they receive. The information from individual educational plans (IEPs) is shared effectively with staff and ensures that the details of individuals' needs remain an important consideration.
- 3.20 The college ensures that the provision set out in statements of special educational needs is fully implemented.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

4.(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

- 4.1 The quality of the student's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 The college successfully achieves its aims of encouraging confidence, self-belief, self-discipline and personal development. This development is encouraged by an ethos which welcomes and respects members of different faiths and cultures and whereby every individual can play a full and positive part in the life of the community. Students showed great confidence when discussing what they were working towards and how they can achieve their goals. Students have a mature appreciation and awareness of the non-material aspects of life and welcome opportunities to reflect on these in lessons and in their daily lives around the school. Through the study of literature, poetry and music, students gain an understanding of the world beyond the physical and from the art and photographic work displayed students gain an excellent appreciation of the world around them.
- 4.3 Students show a keen sense of moral awareness. They have a well-developed sense of right and wrong. The vast majority of the students appreciate the need for the few important rules that the college has and accept the code of conduct. They respect their surroundings and look after the premises and fabric of the college. This awareness is endorsed in lessons and pastoral discussions, whilst PSHE lessons and lectures help encourage individual responsibility. Students express clear views about appropriate behaviour and attitudes towards each other; they accept that everyone is different but want to be inclusive. Discussions in religious studies give students the chance to debate topics such as euthanasia and atheism and they do so with insight.
- 4.4 The students' social development is excellent. Relationships are very strong; staff and students work well together to create a warm community atmosphere. A minority of students indicated in the pre-inspection questionnaire that they are not given opportunities to take on responsibilities. The college has no offices for students, however, students do contribute to the life of the college, acting as mentors for new overseas students and as college ambassadors on open days. Some art students help as mentors in a local primary school as part of a community art project. Students are alive to a sense of social responsibility beyond the college and are actively involved in fundraising for various charities. Good political and economic awareness is gained in lessons and from the programme of lectures delivered by visiting speakers.
- 4.5 The students' cultural development is excellent, developed through lessons, college events, and educational visits and by the very nature of the school community. Students appreciate their own culture but also enjoy and celebrate the diversity of the college; there is wide participation in the celebrations of cultural festivals. Students gain insight into many faiths from discussions in lessons, the personal, social and health education programme (PSHE) and visits to places of worship. Regular theatre and museum visits, outside speakers and a variety of local and overseas trips all contribute and enhance the students' cultural awareness.
- 4.6 The students are articulate; they are courteous, friendly and considerate. They listen to the views of others, take responsibility for their actions and are proud of their college, eager to benefit from the opportunities it presents. This maturity and

self-confidence prepares them well for the next stage of their lives, ready to meet the challenges ahead.

4.(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 The college successfully meets its aims to provide pastoral care that promotes the students' independence, whilst fostering respect and tolerance across different age groups and all nationalities.
- 4.9 Directors of studies, who are also members of the pastoral team, play a pivotal role in providing excellent pastoral support. Their support for the students provides overarching guidance in all matters academic and personal. This care, operated in close liaison with all parties concerned, supports the excellent personal development of the students and is a strength of the college.
- 4.10 Excellent relationships between students and staff, and amongst the students themselves, are seen in all areas of college life. Staff know and understand the students, the students greatly value the support they receive and during interviews they expressed appreciation for the availability and willingness of tutors to help them.
- 4.11 Regular exercise is encouraged through the programme of sport and extra-curricular activities, however the provision of sport for girls is limited. Guidance regarding a healthy lifestyle is also provided through the PSHE programmes and posters around the college, and the small canteen provides a selection of healthy food.
- 4.12 Measures to guard against bullying are highly effective and the college's behaviour policy is clear, comprehensive and well respected by students. Almost all the students responding to pre-inspection questionnaire felt that rewards and sanctions are fair. In questionnaire responses and interviews the vast majority of students said that incidents of bullying are rare but should they occur they would be dealt with effectively.
- 4.13 Monthly meetings enable discussion of aspects of pastoral care and review of the needs of those students who may require additional support. Students have regular meetings with their directors of studies on a one-to-one basis in addition to any ad hoc meetings. In questionnaire responses, a small minority of students felt that their opinions are not invited. Inspection evidence does not support this view. The college employs effective methods to seek the views of students. The student council provides a forum for student opinions to be aired and for ideas to be suggested and a number of recent initiatives have resulted from this, such as additional drinking water provision and the student annual ball.
- 4.14 The college has a suitable three-year plan to improve educational access for students with SEND.

4.(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety

- 4.15 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.16 The college successfully fulfils its aim to safeguard all members of the community and promote their welfare. All necessary arrangements for safeguarding students are in place and have regard to official guidance. Safeguarding and welfare requirements are understood by all staff and are met throughout the college. All staff receive regular training in safeguarding and the designated safeguarding officers have been trained in child protection and inter-agency working. Students confirm that they feel safe at the college.
- 4.17 All necessary measures to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards, including chemicals, and mechanical and electrical equipment are firmly in place. Regular fire practices are held and a fire risk assessment has been carried out. Fire evacuation procedures and exits are clearly shown around the college. In practical lessons students wear appropriate items of personal safety equipment.
- 4.18 Detailed risk assessments are carried out for college trips and expeditions and a member of staff has a specific role co-ordinating this. The health and safety committee meets regularly and responds effectively to concerns raised by staff and other employees. First-aid boxes are available in all areas of the college and are well maintained. The first-aid policy is clear and comprehensive, first-aid training for staff is up to date and appropriate. There are adequate medical facilities for students who are ill, injured or have SEND.
- 4.19 The admission and attendance registers are completed correctly and stored for the required length of time.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The excellent oversight, challenge and stimulus provided by members of the board enable the college to achieve its aims for both the students' academic and personal development. Members of the board have a breadth of experience in a range of areas from which the college benefits and they attend conferences relevant to their roles.
- 5.3 Meetings of the board are held monthly during the academic year and in addition an MPW group managing committee meets by conference call approximately monthly during term. Members of the board review educational standards including all public examination results, extra-curricular provision and matters of students' welfare, health and safety. The provision of physical activities for girls is currently under consideration. Members of the board have an excellent insight into the workings of the college and offer support and challenge to contribute effectively to its strategic development planning.
- 5.4 A regulatory compliance sub-committee meets five times a year and auditing ensures that the colleges' compliance with regulatory requirements is considered on a rolling programme. Members of the board are rigorous in discharging their responsibilities for the annual review of child protection and safeguarding arrangements, and for oversight of welfare, health and safety.
- 5.5 Members of the board oversee college finances prudently; this enables them to invest in resources, accommodation and high quality staff. The board takes seriously its responsibilities to approve all policies and check their effectiveness.
- 5.6 The board have implemented the recommendations from the previous report.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians

- 5.7 The quality of leadership and management including links with parents, carers and guardians is excellent.
- 5.8 Excellent leadership at all levels enables the college to fulfil its aims of encouraging pupils to have high academic aspirations, to ensure the highest standards of pastoral care and to provide a friendly, informal environment in which students are encouraged to develop personal discipline and values.
- 5.9 Energetic and innovative senior leadership underpins much of the college's success in its quest for further improvement. The senior leadership team is an effective and open team in whom other staff express confidence. A clear vision and educational direction are evident throughout the college, inspiring considerable commitment and hard work from the staff, who give freely of their time in support of the students. Expectations of both staff and pupils are high. Senior leaders construct comprehensive development plans covering all aspects of the work of the college. Senior staff are very effective in ensuring that policies are implemented consistently.

- 5.10 Since the previous inspection the head of faculty role has been introduced and these figures are members of the senior leadership team. They liaise directly with groups of departmental heads. This has resulted in improved regular communication between middle and senior management. This supports the strong leadership of the academic work of the college at both faculty and departmental level. Departmental heads are accountable for the work of their departments, and a programme of monitoring takes place throughout the year, including lesson observation and work scrutiny. This meets the recommendations of the previous inspection. Leadership of the pastoral life of the college is also excellent. The pastoral team which comprises the vice-principals and the directors of studies provide a carefully crafted blend of support.
- 5.11 Since the previous inspection the college has developed a new appraisal system which includes a holistic gathering of evidence including self-evaluation. This process promotes further improvements in teaching and learning and the identification of areas for continuing professional development for staff.
- 5.12 Suitable care is taken over staff appointments and induction; the procedures for the induction of new staff are thorough. Staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. The dedicated team of administrative and support staff makes a significant contribution to the smooth running of the college. Robust measures are in place to ensure that suitable and well qualified staff are appointed. Appropriate recruitment checks are carried out prior to appointment and suitably recorded.
- 5.13 The college discharges, extremely well, its aim to work with parents, carers and guardians to encourage a strong work ethic in students. There is a positive relationship between all groups and staff. Members of the senior leadership team go overseas to meet parents to review individual students' written reports and discuss their progress. The majority of responses to the pre-inspection parents' questionnaire indicate strong satisfaction overall with the information that they receive.
- 5.14 A small minority of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that the college does not encourage them to be involved in events and other aspects of its work. Inspectors found that a growing number of opportunities exist for parents to become involved with the life of the college. A series of parental seminars take place each term addressing issues that commonly affect students aged 14 to 19. Parents are invited to share their professional expertise with students at the annual careers week and some parents are invited to speak at the annual prize giving.
- 5.15 The college website facilitates effective communication between the college and parents. It is a valued source of information and includes all required information for parents and prospective parents, including school policies, and news of recent events and achievements. There is a detailed parental handbook, and the parents' portal gives information about homework and assessments. Parents appreciate the ability to access information about their child's progress and attainment. Parents receive detailed reports five times during the academic year; these reports include targets and helpful comments. Parents of GCSE students are invited to attend a parents' consultation evening.
- 5.16 The college has a suitable complaints procedure which is available to parents. This is operated appropriately, when necessary, which is rarely. In the last academic year there was one complaint invoking the formal complaints procedure.

What the school should do to improve is given at the beginning of the report in section 2.