



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

ST TERESA'S PREPARATORY SCHOOL

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

St Teresa's Preparatory School

Full Name of School	St Teresa's Preparatory School
DfE Number	936/6571
EYFS Number	EY385724
Registered Charity Number	1095103
Address	St Teresa's Preparatory School Beech Avenue Effingham Hill Dorking Surrey RH5 6ST
Telephone Number	01372 453456
Fax Number	01372 451562
Email Address	prepinfo@st-teresas.com
Headmistress	Mrs Susan Nelson
Chair of Governors	Mr Michael Bray
Age Range	2 to 11
Total Number of Pupils	156
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (age 2 to 4); Girls (age 5 to 11)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 3 5-11: 127 3-5 (EYFS): 26
Head of EYFS Setting	Miss Sarah Bryett
EYFS Gender	Girls (age 2 to 5); Boys (age 2 to 4)
Inspection dates	24 Jun 2014 to 25 Jun 2014

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule* for intermediate inspections, focusing on the Early Years Foundation Stage. The inspection occurs over a period of two continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in May 2011.

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. ISI is also approved to inspect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which was introduced in September 2008 and applies to all children in England from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday. This report evaluates the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework published by the Department for Education (DfE) and follows the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 as subsequently amended.

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.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted informal discussions with children and examined samples of work. They held discussions with the headmistress, 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 and an assembly. The responses of parents to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Ann Stranack

Early Years Lead Inspector

Mrs Kathryn Henry

Team Inspector for Early Years (Former Deputy Head, IAPS School)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 St Teresa's Preparatory School is a Catholic day school for girls between the ages of two and eleven years. The Nursery admits boys between the ages of two and four years. The school aims to provide a broad education based on sound Christian principles in a happy, caring atmosphere. They hope to involve the parents constructively and helpfully with the educational progress of their children. The school is a charitable trust and has the same governing body and bursar as the Senior School. The present headmistress of the Prep School was appointed in September 2013.
- 1.2 The Prep School was founded in 1954. In January 2009 it moved into new buildings on the site of the Senior School. The site comprises 48 acres of parkland and woodland near the village of Effingham in Surrey. The Reception classroom is in the main building with direct access to a secure outdoor area. The Nursery children occupy an adjacent building and the surrounding play area. The head of Nursery and the Reception teacher have been appointed since the last inspection. The Nursery now has an outdoor covered area and there has been investment in information and communication technology (ICT) and play equipment.
- 1.3 The school has 156 pupils. There are 39 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Twenty-three girls and six boys are in the two Nursery classes, of whom three are under three, and three attend full-time. The boys and some girls leave after Nursery for maintained or other independent schools. Ten girls are full-time in Reception. Reception girls are most likely to continue into the Prep School. There are no children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or English as an additional language (EAL). The majority of the children are white British and most live locally.
- 1.4 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school for the EYFS and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Nursery	Nursery Age 2-3
Nursery plus	Nursery Age 3-4
Reception	Reception

2. SUMMARY

(i) Compliance with statutory requirements

- 2.1 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvements:
1. Develop more opportunities for outdoor child-initiated activities and unrestricted movement between inside and outside in the Reception class.
 2. Ensure that Nursery and Reception children share learning experiences and resources.

3. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

3.(a) How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

- 3.1 The setting makes outstanding provision in meeting the needs of the range of children who attend. Detailed planning for the youngest children gives priority to the prime areas of learning; communication and language, physical and personal, social and emotional development, whilst also incorporating literacy, mathematics, understanding the world and expressive arts and design. This enables all children to converse with enjoyment, increasingly using clear sentences. Relevant activities encourage many opportunities for counting in Nursery and problem solving in Reception. Generous resources encourage excellent ICT development. Children are skilled and confident in using interactive whiteboards, computers and programmable toys. The curriculum is enriched by specialist teaching for ballet, drama, French, music, physical education, and swimming. The extended day and extra-curricular programmes are extremely well organised to enhance the children's experiences.
- 3.2 A very effective balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities ensure that children make independent choices, as was seen during the Reception children's library visit. It allows time for imaginative play and investigation, for example Nursery children participated in a floating and sinking experiment. Enthusiastic staff motivate the children so they are prepared for their next stage of learning. Careful planning ensures that the Nursery playground supports all learning areas. Space limitations prevent this for Reception. Well-established systems support children with learning difficulties. High-quality, focused assessments and excellent understanding of individual abilities ensure that children's progress is celebrated. Most children reach or exceed their expected levels in the seven areas of learning.
- 3.3 Parents appreciate the open door policy. Generous staffing ratios allow opportunities for conversation at the beginning and end of the day. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire a minority of parents suggested that they receive insufficient information about their children's progress. The inspection found that detailed information was shared with parents daily by discussion and through contact books. A small number of parents felt that concerns and questions are not always dealt with promptly by the school's leadership. Inspection found that school leaders are readily available daily, and that the school handles concerns appropriately. Parents are pleased with their children's progress. They appreciate that their children are happy, feel safe and are excellently looked after. The school's aim to provide a happy and caring atmosphere is achieved.

3.(b) The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being

- 3.4 Provision for children's well-being is outstanding. The excellent care provided by the well-established key person system allows all children, including those under three, to be happy at school. They settle quickly and enthusiastically to a chosen activity. The staff provide excellent role models, encouraging children to adopt considerate and cooperative behaviour. For example the youngest listen carefully to each other during the morning welcome and the oldest play effective team games. From Nursery onwards children are encouraged to be independent, especially when

pouring drinks. The secure surroundings, and excellent relationships with staff and each other, give children confidence to share their imaginative ideas with visitors.

- 3.5 The importance of physical exercise is emphasised. The Nursery children enjoy the challenging climbing equipment and Reception girls are encouraged to raise their personal standard when throwing. Nutritious meals and snacks develop the children's awareness of healthy eating. Reception lunchtime provides a very happy social occasion where good manners are encouraged. All children understand the importance of hand-washing while learning to manage their own personal hygiene.
- 3.6 Close communication between staff and careful planning prepare the children well for transitions. Much effort is made to engage with the schools to which the boys and some girls transfer. Nursery children join the Prep School for lunch, assemblies and special events but opportunities to share learning experiences with Reception are limited. The older children enjoy many and varied activities with Prep School pupils. All appreciate the help Year 5 girls give to the EYFS.

3.(c) The leadership and management of the early years provision

- 3.7 Leadership and management are good. The governors give very helpful support to the EYFS. The excellent team of practitioners have a clear understanding of the learning and development requirements, so that every child is challenged by daily plans which reflect their current interests.
- 3.8 Scrutiny of evidence prior to the inspection showed that the school has not always been rigorous in ensuring that it keeps up-to-date with the most recent regulatory requirements. By the time of the inspection, the school had taken suitable steps to ensure that identified shortcomings had been dealt with, and all arrangements now comply with requirements. The staff, who have all been suitably checked, have a clear understanding of the very well established safeguarding and welfare procedures and provide a safe but stimulating environment.
- 3.9 The whole team are involved in the department plan and agree identified areas for improvement. Appraisal is very well established and encourages professional development. This is appreciated by staff as a means of improving opportunities for the children. Current management changes have interrupted the implementation of the detailed supervision policy.
- 3.10 Strong partnerships with parents support EYFS activities. Their help with outings and information sharing is much appreciated. Very productive relationships exist with the local authority and other outside agencies, ensuring that the children's needs are always fully met.

3.(d) The overall quality and standards of the early years provision

- 3.11 The overall quality and standards of the provision are outstanding. All children, including the most able, make very good progress in relation to their starting points particularly in communication, language and literacy. Children are given opportunities to repeat their chosen activities so they can develop self-evaluation and critical thinking skills. The youngest children are confident with the daily phonic activities and count carefully to five. Older children read fluently and complete number sums using coins.
- 3.12 The children's personal and social development is excellent. They concentrate carefully and contribute with confidence during whole-school assemblies. The

youngest work cooperatively when painting the fence and are very independent when selecting aprons and choosing activities. Reception children are confident as they make their lunch choices. They listen respectfully to each other and show interest in different opinions. Excellent standards of behaviour allow children to enjoy the freedom to work in or outside. The staff understand the children extremely well so that they thrive in a happy, secure environment, where the requirements for welfare and safeguarding are met. Parents appreciate the high level of care and teaching provided by very committed staff.

- 3.13 Since the previous inspection the leadership and management have ensured that assessment procedures have developed significantly. Observations are now made regularly throughout the day, particularly during child-initiated activities. Ideas for future developments demonstrate a strong commitment to continuous improvement so as to secure the best possible outcomes for the children.