

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report For Schools with Residential Provision

St Teresa's School

May 2023

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School	St Teresa's Sch	nool		
DfE number	936/6418			
Registered charity number	1095103			
Address	St Teresa's Sch	nool		
	Effingham			
	Dorking			
	Surrey			
	RH5 6ST			
Telephone number	01372 452037			
Email address	info@st-teres	as.com		
Headteacher	Dr Claire McSł	Dr Claire McShane		
Chair of governors	Mrs Annette T	Mrs Annette Turner		
Proprietor	St Teresa's Eff	St Teresa's Effingham Schools' Trust Ltd		
Age range	11 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	478			
	Day pupils	421	Boarders	57
	Seniors	416	Sixth Form	62
Inspection dates 10		2023		

School's Details

1. Background Information

About the school

1.1 St Teresa's School is a Roman Catholic day and boarding school for female pupils, located two miles from Dorking. Founded in 1928 by the Religious Order of Christian Instruction, ownership was transferred in 2002 to St Teresa's School Effingham Trust. The school is a registered charity administered by a board of governors who are also its trustees. The majority of the board members are Catholic foundation governors. Since the previous inspection, Cranmore School has joined the Effingham Trust.

What the school seeks to do

1.2 The school aims to encourage pupils to do well through the pursuit of academic excellence across the curriculum and beyond. It seeks to provide support, encouragement and challenge so that pupils realise their potential and are well prepared for the future. The school promotes high standards of personal behaviour and the development of moral and spiritual values.

About the pupils

1.3 Day pupils come from the local area and are mostly drawn from families with professional backgrounds. The majority of boarders are from overseas and come from 13 different countries. The school has identified 154 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) which include dyslexia, dyspraxia, autism, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), 65 of whom receive additional specialist support. Three pupils have educational, health and care (EHC) plans. English is an additional language (EAL) for 39 pupils, 15 of whom have additional specialist support for their English. Enrichment opportunities are provided for those pupils identified as being the most able in the school's population.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, including the National Minimum Standards for Boarding ('boarding NMS'), where applicable. Additionally, inspections report 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. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are 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 FOCUSED 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 <u>met</u> or as <u>not met</u>. 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 standards have been inspected in detail. These are the standards on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety; arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management. 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 standards and requirements can be found here: <u>The Education (Independent School Standards)</u> <u>Regulations 2014, and National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools.</u>

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 2022 and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school's GCSE and A-level results in the years 2019 to 2022 confirm that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 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. Boarders have access to a suitable programme of activities.
- 2.4 Pupils receive relationships and sex education, except in so far as they are lawfully excused. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.5 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.

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

- 2.6 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. Boarders are supported to develop good relationships with fellow pupils and staff which are based on mutual trust and respect. Any prefect system operating in the school is suitably managed.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] and NMS 13, 17 and 21 are met.

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.8 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.
- 2.9 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. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.
- 2.10 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 3, 5–12, 15, 16 and 20 are met.

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.11 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.
- 2.12 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] and NMS 19 and 22 are met.

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.13 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' 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.
- 2.14 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 4, 7 and 23 are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

- 2.15 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes 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. It also includes 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.
- 2.16 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and NMS 1 are met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

- 2.17 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.
- 2.18 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 14 are met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 2.19 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 wellbeing of the pupils. Appropriate leadership and management of boarding ensure that the required policies and records are maintained and effectively monitored.
- 2.20 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] and NMS 2 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.

The headline judgements apply 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. Key findings

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
 - Pupils make excellent progress across a range of subjects and in their extra-curricular activities.
 - Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding across the broad curriculum are excellent.
 - Pupils are excellent communicators, highly articulate speakers and mature listeners.
 - Pupils' attitudes to learning in academic and co-curricular areas are excellent.
 - Pupils' relationships between their fellow peers and with staff are exceptional.
- 3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
 - Pupils' self-knowledge, self-esteem, self-confidence and self-discipline are outstanding.
 - Pupils demonstrate notably high levels of confidence in respect of their decision-making and are willing to take risks in their learning.
 - Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent.
 - Pupils' make excellent contributions to the school and the wider community.
 - Pupils' knowledge and understanding of how to stay safe and how to be physically and mentally healthy is excellent.

Recommendation

- 3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
 - Ensure pupils' experience of boarding is enhanced by prioritising the implementation of the boarding management and development plan.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.5 The school successfully fulfils its aim to encourage pupils to do well through the pursuit of academic excellence across the curriculum and beyond. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires, the vast majority of parents agreed that the school helps their children to be confident and independent and that teaching enables their children to make progress. A large majority of pupils in the questionnaire agreed that the school helps them learn and make progress although a small minority felt that some lessons were less interesting. Inspection evidence shows that pupils of all abilities are highly engaged and challenged in lessons. Boarding enables pupils to contribute to school activities, both academic and extra-curricular, however comprehensive integration of the boarding

and day aspects of the school's organisation is lacking, which leads to some pupils in the boarding community not feeling as integrated and involved with school life as they would like to be in comparison to their day school peers.

- 3.6 Pupils demonstrate excellent levels of academic achievement as a result of highly committed senior leaders and teachers who ensure all pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, achieve beyond their potential in public examinations. Highly effective tracking, monitoring and intervention systems contribute to significant value being added to pupils' progress and academic outcomes across a broad range of subjects. At A Level, significant progress has been made in grade outcomes over the period 2019 to 2022, particularly in terms of A* and A grades. Pupils' attainments at A level were excellent in 2022, with all subjects being graded in the range A* to E, with over two-thirds of the grades being awarded at A* to A level. At GCSE, there were particularly high outcomes in history, combined science and mathematics, and across all subjects half of the grades awarded were in the top three grades. These results are broadly in line with the centre and teacher assessed results in 2020 and 2021 and significantly higher than those in 2019. This also reflects attainment of pupils' with SEND and EAL who make excellent progress, due to the support they receive. Pupils' results and lesson observations indicate individualised stretch and challenge through many areas of the curriculum.
- 3.7 Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding across the range of subjects are excellent. In many cases, pupils work at levels beyond their chronological age and they clearly relish the challenges this presents. Pupils confidently use their prior learning and achievements to make excellent progress. Pupils in Year 9 confidently displayed their drama skills in a presentation to their year group and pupils in Year 8 demonstrated excellent technical skills in undertaking a detailed piece of art work, accurately depicting inert objects. In Year 13, pupils demonstrated exceptional skills and understanding when presenting their extended project qualification (EPQ) projects, for example, on whether neuro marketing is ethically justifiable. In a Year 10 biology lesson, pupils demonstrated rapid progress in their understanding of the role of limiting factors in photosynthesis through their own design of a glasshouse to optimise growth rates.
- 3.8 Pupils' communication skills are of a particularly high standard. They demonstrate excellent listening skills in most lessons observed and in discussions on achievement and personal development, maintaining appropriate eye contact, nodding supportively and allowing the speaker to complete their point before responding. This was equally true when they listened to adults and to their peers. Pupils are eloquent, erudite and articulate when speaking. They express their views and understanding succinctly. For example, pupils in Year 12 produced an excellent masterclass lesson which they had used to successfully help Year 5 pupils in local primary schools to understand the concept of fractions. Pupils in Year 10 explained to peers their knowledge and understanding of a programming task in a computer science lesson. Most pupils are excellent listeners in lessons. They express themselves clearly and employ complex, subject-specific vocabulary, as seen in a chemistry lesson when pupils in Year 10 applied the correct nomenclature to alkanes of increasing length.
- 3.9 The development of pupils' competence in numeracy and the application of their mathematical knowledge and skills to other areas of learning is strong. Pupils talk confidently about how they are able to use their mathematical skills across the curriculum, for example, in business studies and science. Pupils use number manipulation confidently when applying mathematical operations to subjects such as physics, chemistry, biology and psychology. For example, pupils in Year 10 used energy calculations to produce charts in physics and successfully applied statistical analysis of research data in psychology. Pupils further support their progress by accessing after-school mathematics clinics which they find helpful.
- 3.10 Pupils' use of information and communication technology (ICT) is well managed and is being applied across an increasing number of areas of the curriculum. From Year 7 pupils develop competent ICT skills which are used appropriately, but not exclusively throughout all subject areas. ICT is viewed as a tool to further application as seen in the use of digital devices by pupils in Years 7 and 8. In a computer science lesson, pupils in Year 10 were able to create algorithms from a set brief and evaluate their

effectiveness to create a computer programme. As they progress through the school, pupils become more proficient in the use of ICT, developing skills which are used in other curriculum areas, such as science, maths, geography and economics. The effective use of digital platforms increasingly supports pupils' learning and enhances their interactions with teachers, for example in psychology.

- 3.11 Pupils' study skills are excellent across all subjects. Pupils are encouraged to work independently and collaboratively and do so efficiently and enthusiastically. They demonstrate excellent independence through research using a wide range of sources. They often prefer to embrace a challenge rather than take an easier path through a task. High order thinking was evident in a number of lessons and pupils respond positively to teachers' encouragement to hypothesise and challenge their thinking. For example, in a geography lesson, pupils in Year 9 were highly engaged and maturely discussed and recorded the impact of earthquakes and the steps required to increase survival. Pupils appreciate opportunities to hone their debating and public speaking skills in a variety of lessons. These encourage problem solving and innovative thinking and help pupils to make links between words and ideas that make concepts more meaningful. For example, pupils in Year 9 analysed and reflected critically on their performance in a competitive drama presentation.
- 3.12 In line with the school's aims, pupils enjoy an exceptionally broad range of activities beyond the classroom. Music and drama play an important part in school life and the diverse range of style is a distinctive feature of the pupils' music-making and drama productions. For example, pupils perform in choirs, orchestras and other ensembles in a range of school and regional venues, including in a recent production of the musical *Hairspray*, and in a classical music concert. Pupils wholeheartedly participate in the extensive programme of sport culminating in regular annual fixtures across a range of disciplines including, netball, football, athletics and cricket. Additionally, water-based sports are popular with a number of pupils who compete successfully in swimming, both in the pool and in open water. Individuals are highly successful in a range of sports at local, regional and national levels. Pupils enjoy personal and academic success through the school's encouragement to develop their interest and talent in a range of regional and national competitions, for example in science and maths. Pupils successfully compete in a variety of local and international dressage and show jumping competitions, often gaining awards and distinctions. In response to the questionnaire, the vast majority of parents and pupils feel that the school provides a suitable range of extra-curricular activities.
- 3.13 Pupils are highly enthusiastic and determined learners. They willingly take risks, enjoy the opportunities that different styles of teaching present and rise to challenging opportunities when these are offered. They attend lessons well prepared and ready for challenge. Pupils in the sixth form embrace the opportunities to manage their own time and recognise the importance of being independent learners in preparation for further education. Pupils are particularly good at taking ownership of their learning. They are competent at conducting their own research in history, geography and science, and are capable of solving problems and using higher order thinking skills in maths and English. Whilst being positive and independent learners, pupils are also keen to work collaboratively with their teachers and peers. They are responsive to their teachers' directions and willingly play an active part in lessons, as seen in a Year 10 physics lesson working out the mass of various sweets using the principles of turning forces and moments. In a religious education lesson on marriage, pupils in Year 9 maturely discussed its purpose and the key points couples should consider before deciding on life-long commitments.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.14 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.15 Pupils' take a significant role in developing their self-knowledge, self-esteem, self-confidence, selfdiscipline and resilience. They show an excellent understanding of how to improve their learning and performance and are not afraid to seek help when required. The school's well-structured approach, which places independence in learning at the heart of its ethos, leads to exceptionally motivated

learners. For example, in a self-assessment exercise in science, pupils in Year 7 suggested the use of different colours to label diagrams of a flower. The secure atmosphere and culture of the school enables pupils to have the confidence to grow and succeed in their learning as seen when pupils studying A-level psychology self-evaluated and identified areas for improvement.

- 3.16 Pupils' ability to make decisions is strong and pupils are aware that the decisions they make can influence their futures. For example, pupils appreciate the support they receive from the school when making crucial decisions about GCSE and A-level subject choices. Pupils relish opportunities to make a difference and talk freely of how they have influenced school decision-making through school councils. Sixth form pupils are excellent role models and are given many responsibilities for organising events and mentoring younger pupils. They actively encourage younger pupils to make the right decisions, through the buddy programme, and peer mentoring systems, which in turn promotes their own leadership development. Pupils make well-informed choices about activities they do within the extra-curricular programme to help balance their lifestyle and in some cases, provide a source of exercise that they would not otherwise experience. The early stages of this process were on display in a Year 8 assembly about striking the best work-play balance as they approached the end of year exams. They made good choices about study time and when to take time off for physical exercise or relaxation.
- 3.17 From Year 7, pupils develop an excellent spiritual understanding and an appreciation of non-material aspects of life, including religious and philosophical concepts, passionate involvement in sports and an appreciation of their school surroundings. Pupils enjoy and value annual retreats, which involve a blend of team games, activities, reflection and prayer around a common theme, helping to promote pupils' understanding and appreciation of the real world. An appreciation of the world beyond the school gates is developed through activities organised by the chapel team which encourage pupils to volunteer in the local area. Catholicism forms the mainstay of the spiritual ethos of the school and in boarding. Other religions and traditions are studied in the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) and religious education programmes.
- 3.18 Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. Where pupils occasionally fall below the expected standards, they generally respond maturely, and gently correct themselves. Pupils understand and respond well to the system of warnings and sanctions. Most pupils feel that teachers are consistent and fair in their use of rewards and sanctions and are kind and considerate when dealing with problems; something pupils learn to apply to each other. They are highly confident in articulating their acceptance of responsibility for their own behaviour and understand the importance of treating others how they would wish to be treated themselves. Sixth form pupils feel their independence and sense of trust are enhanced as a result of an increased awareness of accountability as they develop through the school. In their responses to the questionnaires, a minority of pupils, including boarders, did not agree that their opinions and views were listened to and responded to by the school. Inspection evidence and discussions with groups of pupils, indicated that the school welcomes pupils' opinions and in many cases responds positively to their suggestions.
- 3.19 Pupils' social development is excellent. They are friendly and courteous hosts, showing pride in their school and a willingness to guide visitors around the campus. Pupils enjoy working collaboratively and frequent opportunities for partner and group work in lessons lead to fruitful outcomes as seen by pupils in Years 7 and 8 games lessons, where pupil interaction and mutual support of each other when undertaking an athletics training session was excellent. This is as a result of the enthusiastic teaching which prompts excited and focused participation from the pupils. Almost all parents in the questionnaire agreed that the school helps their children to develop strong teamwork and social skills. Overall, there is a strong culture of mutual support between pupils and this was evident in lessons and within the boarding community. Physical activity and sport are a significant part of social life at school. Pupils are enthusiastic participants, including those who by their own admission are not naturally strong at sport.

- 3.20 Pupils' contribution to others, the school and wider community is excellent. Pupils relish the opportunities they are given to undertake important positions of responsibility. For example, form and vice form captains, ambassadors in the sixth form and prefect roles, enable active representation of the academic, pastoral and social dimensions of school life. Other roles include library, equestrian, art, and chaplaincy and school values prefects, offering pupils a range of opportunities to get fully immersed in school life. Pupils frequently lead house and school charity initiatives, including a focus on creating practical, impactful solutions to support Ukrainian refugees. Each year, one of the five values which underpin the school's ethos is celebrated; in particular during Values Week, which enables pupils to think deeply, have some fun, contribute to worthwhile activities, thus promoting social interaction. The boarding community contributes significantly to the international dimension of the school.
- 3.21 Pupils demonstrate respect for, and appreciation of, the diversity within their school and the wider community. They embrace their own and others' cultures and exhibit sensitivity and tolerance to those from different traditions. In a discussion about marriage, pupils in Year 10 acknowledged and celebrated the fact that that some couples of different faiths hold two ceremonies to respect each other's traditions. Pupils appreciate and commit to special faith and diversity days which celebrate the international nature of the boarding community. Boarders feel well-integrated in the school and enjoy the tolerant and respectful approach by all members of the community. Pupils' leadership of the diversity, equality and inclusion club is highly respected by all.
- 3.22 Pupils' knowledge of how to stay safe and how to be physically and mentally healthy is excellent. They have a strong awareness of safety when travelling to and from school and spoke appreciatively of visiting speakers from the local community. Pupils of all ages receive regular and up to date advice to enable them to stay safe online both in and out of school. Pupils engage maturely with topics related to sexual health in PSHE and RSE lessons. Pupils take an active part in sport and physical activities and appreciate the value of exercise and healthy eating. They understand that physical health underpins mental health and choose a balance of co-curricular activities to support their academic programme. They have a mature appreciation of the school's programme which supports all aspects of their health. In particular, they value the termly pastoral 'check-ins' and the universally popular therapy dog that provides comfort and support for pupils. Pupils demonstrate an excellent awareness of how to keep mentally healthy and spoke of a range of ways of coping with stress. For example, they spoke of how-to de-stress through sport, music and drama. Pupils in Year 7 explained the value of undertaking a 'bounceability' course to increase their personal resilience.

4. Inspection Evidence

4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, had discussions with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the chair of governors and the safeguarding governor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended year group, form meetings and chapel assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the learning support and educational resource areas. Inspectors considered the responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires. The inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Tony Halliwell	Reporting inspector
Mr James Slocombe	Compliance team inspector (Chief academic officer, group of ISC schools)
Mr Malcolm Gough	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Karen Pickles	Team inspector for boarding (Former housemistress, HMC school)
Mr Andrew Selkirk	Team inspector for boarding (Former deputy head, SoH school)