



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report**

**St Teresa's Preparatory School**

**May 2023**

## 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	6
PART 1 – Quality of education provided	6
PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils	6
PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils	6
PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors	6
PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools	6
PART 6 – Provision of information	7
PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled	7
PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools	7
<b>3. Educational Quality Inspection</b>	<b>8</b>
Preface	8
Recommendation	8
The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements	8
The quality of the pupils' personal development	10
<b>4. Inspection Evidence</b>	<b>13</b>

### School's Details

<b>School</b>	St Teresa's Preparatory School			
<b>DfE number</b>	936/6418			
<b>Registered charity number</b>	1095103			
<b>Address</b>	St Teresa's School Effingham Hill Dorking Surrey RH5 6ST			
<b>Telephone number</b>	01372 453456			
<b>Email address</b>	prepinfo@st-teresas.com			
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sarah Conrad			
<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Annette Turner and Mr Michael Henderson			
<b>Proprietor</b>	St Teresa's Effingham Schools' Trust Ltd			
<b>Age range</b>	7 to 11			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	164			
	<b>EYFS</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>Juniors</b>	<b>164</b>
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10 to 12 May 2023			

## **1. Background Information**

### **About the school**

- 1.1 St Teresa's Preparatory School is a single-sex independent day school, originally founded in 1928 as a Roman Catholic day and boarding school for female pupils. It is part of a charitable trust educating female and male pupils from age 3 to 18 across a range of settings. The school shares its site with St Teresa's senior school, which was inspected at the same time. Both schools share the same governing body. The trust became the proprietor of the school in 2019.

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

- 1.2 The school aspires to encourage pupils to rejoice in and do well through the pursuit of academic excellence across the curriculum and beyond, and to provide support, encouragement and challenge so that pupils realise their potential and are well prepared for the future. It seeks to promote high standards of personal behaviour and the development of moral and spiritual values. These values are faith, character, community, compassion and intellect.

### **About the pupils**

- 1.3 Pupils come from families with a range of professional backgrounds. Standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils on entry is average compared to those taking similar tests nationally. The school has identified 38 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia, all of whom receive additional specialist help. No pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for four pupils, whose needs are supported by their classroom teachers. The curriculum is modified to meet the ability needs of all pupils, including the most able, so that they are challenged appropriately.

## 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. 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.** 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 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: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#).

## Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 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 own framework for assessment confirms 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.
- 2.4 Pupils receive relationships education. 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.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is 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 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 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.
- 2.11 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

### **PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools**

- 2.12 Suitable toilet and changing facilities 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.

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

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

2.14 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.

**2.15 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is 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.

**2.17 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is 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 wellbeing of the pupils.

**2.19 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is 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 exhibit excellent attitudes to their studies.
- Pupils achieve notably high levels of achievement in activities beyond the classroom.
- Pupils show an excellent capacity to make links between different areas of study.
- Pupils are highly articulate and regularly use advanced technical vocabulary.

3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.

- Pupils exhibit excellent levels of self-awareness.
- Pupils demonstrate a mature awareness that the decisions they make have an impact on their success or their environment.
- Pupils' spiritual awareness is highly developed and they reflect seriously upon religious and philosophical issues.
- Pupils make an excellent contribution to their school community.

#### Recommendation

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

- Further enhance pupils' understanding and respect of a greater range of diverse cultures and beliefs.

#### 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 range and quality of pupils' achievements across the school are consistently high and fulfil wholly the school's aims. All pupils make excellent progress as they move through the school, achieving results in assessments, higher than those predicted on their arrival at the school. This is as a result of effective support by dedicated staff. Pupils with SEND make strong progress due to effectively planned teaching to meet their needs, and careful tracking and monitoring of progress by senior leaders. Standardised assessment data provided by the school show that, as pupils approach the end of this phase of their education, their attainment is above average compared to those taking similar tests nationally. Pupils are highly successful in gaining academic, creative and sport scholarships upon entry to a range of senior schools with competitive entry requirements.

3.6 Pupils achieve significant successes beyond the classroom. In sport the Year 5 hockey squad won a bronze medal in the Surrey schools county hockey tournament. The equestrian team has achieved



significant success being placed in the top three nationally. The school is ranked in the top ten nationally for biathlon and the under 11 swim medley team recently achieved national champion status. Pupils achieve excellent standards in creative pursuits. For example, the various choirs have performed at local music festivals and in major London venues. Significant numbers of pupils achieve distinctions and merits in national drama and speaking examinations and many achieve success in national mathematics challenges.

- 3.7 Pupils exhibit excellent attitudes towards their learning. They demonstrate initiative and independence, and many pupils ask to complete additional tasks in their own time. Pupils come to lessons prepared to take an active part in all activities and show high levels of engagement. For example, in a Spanish lesson pupils in Year 3 were eager to receive the teacher's challenge and relished the opportunity to prove what they could do. They worked highly productively in small groups and were delighted with themselves and each other when their group successfully recited all the numbers to 20. In a science lesson, pupils in Year 4 exhibited excellent attitudes for their age. They showed palpable excitement about their forthcoming experiment, and worked in a considerate and collaborative manner, each carrying out a role and listening to the ideas of others. Pupils respond positively to the many opportunities to blend independent and group work as a regular feature of lessons.
- 3.8 Pupils display excellent study skills. They make links between different areas of learning, synthesise information and readily hypothesise whilst problem-solving. Higher-order analysis was evident in mathematics when pupils in Year 4 gave a variety of reasons for selecting the odd one out from a selection of time intervals. Pupils in Year 3 made excellent links between the eruption of volcanoes and the nature of a geyser studied in a previous session. Pupils in Year 6 show accomplished skills in planning investigations, writing up comprehensive methods and making appropriate predictions. For example, pupils considered the components in a circuit and how they might behave if variables were changed. Pupils' development in this area is supported by the use of open-ended questioning and challenges provided by teachers. In their response to the pre-inspection questionnaires, a very large majority of parents agreed that the school equips their child with the collaborative and research skills they need in later life.
- 3.9 Pupils display excellent communication skills. They are highly articulate, able to phrase complex sentences and use well-developed vocabulary to express their feelings. This includes pupils with EAL who are often confident to speak aloud. Pupils develop these skills through frequent opportunities to present in class or in public. In group work pupils listen to each other very well, allowing their peers to make meaningful contributions. Pupils read fluently and with expression, readily incorporating complex technical vocabulary. Older pupils show an excellent grasp of comprehension skills such as inference, across a range of genre. The youngest pupils ably demonstrated their understanding of sentence structure when defining expanded noun phrases and included sophisticated adjectives in their poems about volcanoes. When undertaking extended writing tasks, pupils of all abilities in Year 6 demonstrated a well-developed grasp of parts of speech and they responded highly effectively to discussions about higher-order emotive language. More able pupils frequently utilise adventurous vocabulary to illuminate their writing which allows them to successfully create mood and atmosphere in their descriptions.
- 3.10 Pupils exhibit highly developed numeracy skills. They display excellent understanding across a wide range of topics, including aspects of number, shape and data. Work scrutiny and lesson observations show that pupils across the age range develop strong mental arithmetic skills. Pupils employ appropriate technical vocabulary in their work. They are successful problem-solvers and by Year 6, pupils display an excellent knowledge of plausible methods for tackling problems. They confidently pose and answer questions and are assured in their ability to identify and self-correct errors in their thinking. Pupils have responded positively and successfully to changes to the mathematics curriculum as a result of a recent review by senior leaders. Pupils are successful in applying their numeracy skills across the curriculum. For example, in science pupils in Year 5 calculated the food miles involved in

importing food from around the world and made very good use of spreadsheets to graph thermal cooling in beakers. Pupils in Year 6 calculated measurements and scale whilst designing a 3D printing project in their ICT work.

- 3.11 Pupils are highly competent users of information and communication technology (ICT). They successfully use a variety of software to practise skills and present work in subjects such as mathematics, science and history. Participation and achievement for EAL pupils has been enhanced by the use of translation software. High levels of competency were demonstrated by pupils in Year 6 when programming a robot with increasingly complex instructions. Pupils are proficient users of accessories such as VR headsets to explore the virtual world. Older pupils created an excellent school advertisement using video editing software. They recorded film clips around the school site on their tablets and enhanced this by incorporating music and interviews with peers and staff. Other pupils made excellent use of word processing to present World War 2 newspapers. The school meets its previous inspection recommendation to develop the use of ICT throughout the curriculum.
- 3.12 Pupils display an excellent level of knowledge, skills and understanding across their broad curriculum. Pupils in Year 4 demonstrated well-developed drama skills when reproducing their selection of sounds for a countryside soundscape. Pupils in Year 3 exhibited an advanced knowledge of geographical terminology such as mantle, pyroclastic flow and metamorphic. Pupils with SEND made excellent progress in this lesson due to high levels of adult support. Pupils exhibit an excellent range of scientific skills and vocabulary in their work, notably a developed ability to plan investigations and make hypotheses. In a range of subjects, pupils of all abilities demonstrated excellent understanding of prior learning, building on previous knowledge to deepen their understanding. For example, in a swimming lesson, pupils in Year 6 furthered their understanding of the impact of pace and effort on their pulse rate and breathing and how this might impact on future successes. Younger pupils had excellent recall of the elements of music, confidently articulating their understanding of terms such as legato and staccato. Pupils attribute their excellent progress to the effective use of targets set by their teachers.

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

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils show excellent levels of self-understanding. In their religious studies work pupils in Year 6 reflected with great maturity on God's plan for their lives and their understanding of it. They expressed coherently where they felt they might fit into society and the qualities they might bring. Pupils demonstrated an excellent understanding of the concepts of care, compassion, hope and faith. Many pupils show excellent levels of self-confidence. For example, Year 3 pupils showed this when deciding what an open-ended problem might be without the question being provided. They were not afraid to make mistakes and responded with great resilience to challenges to their thinking. Pupils understand how to improve their learning and are supported in this by the use of success criteria and targets agreed with their teacher. Pupils were able to explain how they use these as a checklist to ensure their work contains all of the required elements. In the questionnaires, the overwhelming majority of parents agreed that the school helps their child to be confident and independent.
- 3.15 Pupils exhibit an excellent capacity to make decisions and understand the implications of their choices. Pupils make considered contributions about the school environment, for example deciding which plants to show in the eco club hanging baskets and the opening hours of the library at lunchtimes. School council members make informed decisions on behalf of their peers such as changes to school uniform or deciding on menus whilst attending the catering committee. Pupils make good use of a wide variety of opportunities to raise issues, including use of the suggestion boxes. Pupils demonstrate excellent understanding of the importance of making their own decisions to further their own success. For example, pupils in Year 6 articulately reflected upon the impact of their group's decisions on the success of their young enterprise project. They were justifiably proud of the high level of success they achieved through collaboratively working on marketing and sales. Pupils regularly make decisions

about their study pathways, selecting their own levels of challenge in order to develop their confidence or extend their thinking.

- 3.16 Pupils exhibit a mature appreciation of spirituality and the non-material aspects of life. Pupils in Year 6 showed a highly sophisticated understanding of the notion of love and the associated vocabulary of forgiveness and mercy. They related this successfully to God's unconditional love. They shared thoughtful reflections on parables such as that of the prodigal son. Pupils successfully wrestle with 'big questions' such as why Old Testament stories might still be relevant today. From these they develop an understanding of life lessons such as why we might listen to those who are older and wiser. Pupils exhibited excellent spiritual awareness whilst reciting a prayer in assembly and enthusiastically joining in with uplifting songs of worship. The school meets its aim to promote high standards of personal behaviour and the development of moral and spiritual values in line with the ethos of the school.
- 3.17 Pupils' contribution to others, the school and the community is excellent. Pupils actively contribute to the lives of others in school through roles in the school council, the chaplaincy team and the eco team. Pupils understand that they can make suggestions to initiate projects to support others. Older pupils led the weekly achievement assembly and did so with notable gravitas and maturity. Some of their peers ably supported by offering a high standard of music to support the hymn as members of the assembly band. School council members indicated that they had learned a great deal and discussed their pride at being involved in the interview process for prospective new members of staff. Others successfully fulfil high profile roles as part of the senior pupil team. Pupils contribute very well and are highly motivated to help in the local community. Groups have performed for the elderly in a local retirement home and to residents in a local respite care facility. They make significant efforts to support both local and national charities. For example, the school council recently voted to donate money planned for chocolate for the pupils to be given to a charity supporting refugees instead.
- 3.18 Pupils demonstrate particularly high levels of social awareness. They work together effectively to support one another's successes in paired and group work across a range of activities, teams and committees. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrated highly-developed collaborative skills during an enterprise project where pupils worked in non-friendship groups to create effective business models, products and marketing strategies. Other pupils worked together to solve mathematical clues as part of an escape room project during maths week. Questionnaire responses show that all parents agree that the school helps their child to develop strong teamwork and social skills. Pupils report that they find it helpful to work with others in their year groups to solve problems, and across the school in house events where they regularly compete together in singing and sporting competitions.
- 3.19 In their questionnaire, all pupils acknowledged that the school has high expectations for behaviour. All pupils agreed that the pupils display positive behaviour and attitudes towards others and this was confirmed during inspection activities. Pupils exhibit excellent moral understanding and display excellent manners. Pupils demonstrate strong understanding of the rules. Many classes create their own rules or charters at the start of each year. They understand and respect the behaviour policy and the sanctions imposed and strive to earn the various rewards and merits available.
- 3.20 Pupils exhibit a well-developed cultural understanding. They mix readily with pupils from other backgrounds and are inclusive of them. They make notable progress in their understanding of Christian celebrations through participation in harvest festivals, Christmas celebrations, assemblies and masses. Pupils display a good knowledge of some other faiths such as Islam and Judaism. Their strong respect for other people, including those with protected characteristics, is enhanced through their wide-ranging personal, social and health education (PSHE) syllabus. However, pupils' knowledge of the full range of backgrounds and characteristics seen in 21st century Britain is less well developed. Pupils recently developed their appreciation of diversity when they dressed in family heritage costume for a fete, international parade and food festival to celebrate the coronation. Pupils developed a meaningful understanding of issues around race during Black History Month. For example, in their English work Year 6 pupils showed a detailed understanding of the perspective of an author writing

about the lack of black role models in history. Pupils wrote a considered response showing empathy and understanding.

- 3.21 In their PSHE work pupils show a highly developed understanding of how to achieve a balanced lifestyle, regularly discussing diet, physical activity and balances of work and play. They understand the benefits of spending time alone and with friends and family. They find a balance between indoor and outdoor activities. Pupils demonstrate excellent understanding of how to stay safe and how the school helps to keep them safe, including that they can speak to adults to share their worries. They understand how to stay safe online, including issues of online bullying. Pupils in Year 3 displayed a wide-ranging understanding of the importance of a balanced diet in their science work, such as the need for the different constituent parts of a healthy meal. Pupils in the gardening club understand the benefits of the various vegetables they were growing and the uplifting effects of being in the fresh air. Pupils knowledgeably espouse the benefits of exercise and report their enjoyment of being involved with sports clubs and activities such as country dancing

## 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 a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited 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 Robert Lilley	Reporting inspector
Mr Jeremy Quartermain	Compliance team inspector (Head, HMC school)
Mrs Helen Andrews	Team inspector (Former head of pre-prep, IAPS school)