



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

ST TERESA'S SCHOOL

STANDARD INSPECTION

FINAL VISIT

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

St Teresa's School

Full Name of School/College	St Teresa's School		
DCSF Number	936/6418		
Registered Charity Number	1095103		
Address	St Teresa's School Effingham Hill Dorking Surrey RH5 6ST		
Telephone Number	01372 452037		
Fax Number	01372 450311		
Email Address	l.falconer@stteresas.surrey.sch.uk		
Headmistress	Mrs Lesley Falconer		
Chair of Governors	Reverend Ian Wells		
Age Range	11 to 18		
Total Number of Pupils	369		
Gender of Pupils	Girls		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	5-11:	
	3-5 (EYFS):	11-18:	369
Number of Day Pupils	302	Capacity for flexi-boarding:	12
Number of Boarders	Total:	70	
	Full:	59	Weekly: 11
Inspection date	26 Jan 2010 to 27 Jan 2010		
Final (team) visit	22 Feb 2010 to 24 Feb 2010		

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the STANDARD *ISI schedule*. It consists of two parts: an INITIAL two-day inspection of regulatory requirements followed by a three-day FINAL (team) inspection of the school's broader educational provision. The previous ISI inspection was in April 2004

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Government 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 2003 as subsequently amended with effect from January 2005, May 2007 and February 2009. The range of these Regulations is as follows.

- (a) The quality of education provided (Curriculum)
- (b) The quality of education provided (Teaching)
- (c) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
- (d) The welfare, health and safety of pupils
- (e) The suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors
- (f) The premises and accommodation
- (g) The provision of information
- (h) The manner in which complaints are to be handled

Legislation additional to the welfare, health and safety Standard is as follows.

- (i) The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA).
- (ii) Race, gender and sexual discrimination legislation.
- (iii) Corporal punishment.

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 boarding was not carried out in conjunction with the Children's Directorate of the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), and the report does not contain specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and evaluates the quality of the boarding experience and its contribution to pupils' education and development in general. The full Ofsted Inspection report refers to an inspection in September 2009 and can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk under Inspection reports/Boarding schools.

The inspection does not examine the financial viability of the school or investigate its accounting procedures. The inspectors check the school's health and safety procedures and comment on any significant hazards they encounter: they do not carry out an exhaustive health and safety examination. Their inspection of the premises is from an educational perspective and does not include in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features.

CONTENTS

	Page
1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL	1
2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL AND ACTION POINTS	2
(a) Main findings	2
(b) Action points	3
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	3
(ii) Recommended action	3
3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	4
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills	4
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	5
(c) The contribution of teaching	6
4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	7
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	7
(b) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	8
(c) The quality of boarding education	9
5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	10
(a) The quality of governance	10
(b) The quality of leadership and management	10
(c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians	11
INSPECTION EVIDENCE	12

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 St Teresa's School, Effingham, is a Roman Catholic day and boarding school, with a broad ability intake, which aims to strive for quality and excellence, and to provide the support and guidance to ensure that pupils achieve high academic standards. It seeks to maintain a happy, disciplined and structured environment and to promote dignity, equality and respect, while providing a dynamic and challenging curriculum based on Christian values. It also endeavours to support the growth, development and needs of the whole person within a spiritual framework, and to promote the complete Christian formation of the young people entrusted to its care.
- 1.2 St Teresa's is a school for girls aged eleven to eighteen, fewer than a third of whom are Catholic. It was founded in 1928 by the Religious Order of Christian Instruction and ownership was transferred to St Teresa's School Effingham Trust in 2002. It is situated on a forty-eight acre rural site two miles outside Dorking. The school is administered by a board of governors, of whom the majority must be foundation governors (Catholic). Since the school was last inspected in April 2004, the present headmistress has been appointed, and a long-standing governor has been appointed as the chair of governors.
- 1.3 Since the time of the previous inspection the school has built a new performing arts centre, refurbished the boarding area and upgraded the information and communication technology (ICT) facilities.
- 1.4 Currently 369 pupils are on the roll, of whom 70 are boarders and 82 in the sixth form. The ability profile of the school is above the national average. About half of the Year 7 entrants are from St Teresa's Preparatory School. The school has 2 pupils with statements of special educational needs issued by the local authority but it has identified 116 pupils as having learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD); 51 of them receive specialist learning support. Support in English as an additional language (EAL) is provided for 37 girls.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL AND ACTION POINTS

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Throughout the school the pupils reach high standards in academic work and in other areas. Although there is a broad range of ability amongst the girls, all make significant progress towards GCSE and A level, achieving good results. Additionally, the girls gain many other awards as individuals or in representing their school. They work diligently, present their work neatly and are determined to do well. Their behaviour is excellent. Only a very small number of pupils (about 10 per cent) responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire but there was a fuller response from the parents. Overall, parents expressed their satisfaction with the school. Some parents expressed anxiety about provision for their daughters' special educational needs. However, inspectors found no evidence to support this view. Other parents said that the school has a happy family feel.
- 2.2 The excellent personal development of the girls is a strength of the school. They are supported by the powerful Christian ethos of the community, which nurtures them as individuals and enables them to fulfil their potential wherever it lies. They form excellent relationships with each other and with staff; from the respect with which they are treated, and from the progress they make, they gain a strong sense of self-worth and confidence. They are friendly, courteous and helpful but not afraid to express their opinions. They learn to develop self-discipline, which enables them to apply themselves and persevere in what they do. Every aspect of the school testifies to the faith that is at its heart, although it welcomes those of all faiths and of none. Girls from other cultures and countries are well integrated into the school. The experience of boarding enriches the boarders' education and helps them to enjoy independence as well as to feel a sense of belonging to the community.
- 2.3 The governors are actively involved in strategic planning for the school and fully promote its Christian ethos. Leadership and management are strong, ensuring that robust systems are in place to assist every aspect of the girls' education. The school has responded to concerns raised in the last report. The library has been refurbished and stocked to become an attractive, useful learning resource with full-time librarian cover; the provision and use of information and communication technology have been greatly increased; performance review for non-teaching staff has been introduced. The school has no significant weaknesses but should ensure that the school development plan shows clearly in its annual review how projects are rolled forward; the detail of planning and content of lessons is presented in as refined a manner for the most able as it is for LDD and EAL pupils and that hard copy texts in the careers library are kept as up to date as those available online in the main library.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

(The range of the Independent School Standards Regulations is given in the Preface)

2.4 At the time of the initial visit, the school met all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2003, as subsequently amended.

(ii) Recommended action

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements:

1. show in the annually reviewed school development plan that projects are rolled forward;
2. ensure that the planning and content of lessons and curriculum delivery for the most able are presented in as detailed and refined a manner as they are for pupils with LDD or EAL;
3. ensure that hard copy texts in the careers library are as up to date as those available to pupils online in the main library.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

3.(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills

- 3.1 Pupils achieve good results in public examinations. Results at GCSE, in the last three years for which comparative data is available, have been high when compared with the national average for girls in all maintained schools. Pupils' performance at A level, in the last three years for which comparative data is available, has been high when compared with the national average for girls in all maintained schools, and similar when compared with the average for girls in maintained selective schools. In 2009, three-quarters of the girls gained A or B grades. Pupils make good progress in relation to their ability profile, which is above the national average.
- 3.2 The girls are very well educated, in accordance with the school's aims. They are supported and guided to ensure that they achieve high academic standards. The school monitors progress through standardised assessment systems. All the sixth-form pupils go on to higher education, most to their first choice of university.
- 3.3 In both curricular and extra-curricular activities, the pupils are capable and successful. They are articulate and able to listen intelligently; they read and write with fluency, and their written work demonstrates the concentration and care that they bring to it. They can think logically, analysing historical situations or devising the necessary steps to move from design to creation in ceramics. They are able to transfer abstract concepts to applied situations in physics. Their creative thought is evident in the fine art displayed around the school but also in their imaginative writing in English. They can apply mathematics appropriately and enjoy doing so in mental arithmetic. They ask perceptive, challenging questions in biology. They are confident users of ICT, using the internet for research in many subjects and presenting their GCSE projects in electronic form. In modern foreign languages they respond readily to tasks using the interactive whiteboard. Their attitudes to learning are positive. They work diligently, both individually and co-operatively, taking pains over presentation. They exercise self-discipline in classes, and carry out tasks willingly and to the best of their ability.
- 3.4 Pupils also achieve successes in areas outside the curriculum, for example in music and speech and drama examinations. Last year more than three-quarters of pupils taking Associated Board music examinations gained merit or distinction and two girls are currently studying for the diploma; well over three-quarters of the pupils sitting the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art examinations achieved merit or distinction. The high numbers of girls gaining The Duke of Edinburgh's Award at bronze level help to generate the large sizes of the groups working for silver and gold, fourteen and thirteen respectively in the current year. The school sports teams compete and succeed at county level, this year with the under 15 and under 16 netball teams qualifying for the Surrey finals and the cross country runners doing well individually. The public speaking teams have gained success in English Speaking Union and Rotary competitions. Individual achievements, reported on and applauded in the school newsletter, include many noteworthy successes: one pupil won a place in the National Youth Theatre summer school while another was accepted for the English Youth Ballet production of *Giselle*. Two more had successful auditions for the Glyndebourne Youth Opera, and one pupil was accepted by the BBC and ITV Jazz Band and Orchestra.

3.(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)

- 3.5 The curriculum is effective in its coverage of the requisite areas of learning. In Years 7 to 9 it is broadly balanced, with provision for five languages in Year 7; in Year 8 the girls continue with French and choose one other language. Some imbalance in provision for design technology subjects is being addressed. At GCSE, pupils may take up to ten subjects from a possible nineteen and where the GCSE course in English is not suitable for pupils with EAL, an alternative qualification recognised by universities is offered. At A level there is a wide range of subjects on offer. The curriculum has been enriched since the previous inspection, with the addition in Years 7 to 9 of graphic design and drama (Year 9), at GCSE of dance and, at A level, music technology. The curriculum is suitable for all ages, abilities and needs.
- 3.6 The curriculum meets the aims of the school that place emphasis upon Christian values. There are therefore periods when it is suspended in order to promote those values, for example during a Year 10 activities week or a visit from a professional theatre group delivering plays on personal issues. The previous inspection report said that insufficient time was given to personal, social and health education (PSHE); provision has improved since then. In addition to the half-termly sessions for each year group, PSHE is delivered through form time and in a number of other subjects, with an audit of such topics kept by the school. Pupils value these sessions.
- 3.7 The integration of ICT has been improved since the previous inspection; it is now widely used as a classroom resource. Interactive whiteboards improve the pace of lessons. Pupils in Year 9 particularly commended the use of such technology in modern foreign language lessons.
- 3.8 Careers guidance is offered to Years 9 and above. Sixth-form pupils value the support they are given in preparation for university by their personal tutors. A one-week work experience scheme is organised for Year 12 pupils. The careers library provides current prospectuses for universities. However, some of the more general information text books are out of date, although they are available on-line in the main library.
- 3.9 The school takes justifiable pride in its wide offering of extra-curricular activities, ranging from step aerobics to fine art print-making. Many opportunities exist for school visits to theatres and places of cultural and other interest; there are visits to the school by theatre companies and interesting people, which further contribute to the pupils' overall education.
- 3.10 Community links are strong: pupils fund raise for charity; sixth-form pupils all participate in community service; pupils from Years 9 and 10 have choreographed a junior school production; sixth-form pupils help pilgrims going to Lourdes; and there are trips abroad to support learning in languages.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.11 Teaching is good and it is effective in promoting pupils' progress, contributing to their success. Of the lessons observed during the inspection, most were good with some examples of outstanding practice; a very small proportion were less than successful. Teachers are well qualified, knowledgeable and committed to helping each pupil to make good progress in her learning. Planning is strong and good use is being made of tracking, reporting and internal assessment, which, in the best practice observed during the inspection, were used to inform future planning. Marking of work is thorough, detailed, constructive and encouraging; pupils set their own targets for improvement in each subject, assisted by their teachers. The use of cognitive profiles assists teaching and supports the education of each pupil. Observed lessons showed clear learning objectives, for example in a Year 7 mathematics class on measuring angles.
- 3.12 Classroom organisation and management are good. Teachers use an extensive variety of materials and plan suitable activities for the pupils, with whom they have a friendly and relaxed relationship, while insisting on high standards of behaviour and courtesy. They know their pupils very well and can therefore respond to individual needs. A sense of fun and enjoyment characterises many of the lessons so that the pupils engage readily with questioning or tasks. The teaching helps to ensure that pupils of varying ability make good progress in developing a secure knowledge and skill base.
- 3.13 The teaching of those pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is careful and forms part of a comprehensive process of screening, diagnosis and individual help. Individual education plans are created as necessary, and all teaching staff are kept well informed of the particular needs of each girl. Girls with EAL are also screened and given extra help. There is good communication amongst their teachers so that, wherever possible, the pupils are able to access the full curriculum. Girls who need help with English have individual or group lessons instead of modern foreign languages.
- 3.14 The planning and delivery of the curriculum for the most able needs to be as detailed as that for the LDD and EAL pupils. However, some evidence in both planning and delivery showed accommodation of the most academically able, and sensitivity towards their need for rigour, and independence of thought and learning. The matching of tasks to ability is chiefly through setting, and little was observed within lessons, where the same tasks were given to all pupils and extension activities were rarely observed.
- 3.15 Resources support the teaching very well across all subjects. Displays of pupils' work are attractive and informative. The upgrading of library facilities and the new theatre provide excellent accommodation and facilities for enhancing learning.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 Considered very good at the time of the previous inspection, the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils within a happy Christian community remains a notably successful aspect of the school's provision. Relationships between staff and pupils are congenial. The staff support the girls in their work and in their lives. Amongst girls too, relationships are warm and generous, and staff comment on the way in which the girls help one another.
- 4.2 Pupils' personal development is exceptionally good and accords with the aims of the school that seek to 'support the growth, development and needs of the whole person within a spiritual framework'. The chapel is highly regarded by the pupils and its chaplain is seen as a source of support and compassion throughout the school community. Girls commented favourably on inclusive activities such as the autumn term Eucharist, Easter meditation and summer thanksgiving. It was observed that pupils all either participate in prayer or show sensitivity to the beliefs of others. They also devise their own assemblies. They are self-aware as well as being conscious of the needs and feelings of others, both within the school and in the wider community.
- 4.3 The house system provides good support for pupils' moral development, particularly through the charitable fund-raising that exists throughout the school. House assemblies also promote the sense of community that is strong throughout the school and remind pupils and teachers of the underlying values of the school. Moral issues are additionally explored in lessons such as English and religious studies, and values such as good manners and consideration for others were evident in the behaviour of pupils at all times.
- 4.4 Pupils are extremely well developed socially and are eager to take on responsibility. For example, the peer mentoring system is highly valued by the girls, who regard it as an effective support for younger girls by older ones. Sixth formers also help younger girls with the content and presentation of house assemblies. A school council meets regularly and is attended by form captains. Pupils were doubtful about the effectiveness of the council but were confident that they could express their views to their form teachers. Other responsibilities within the school, such as showing around visitors, are much prized and help to increase the girls' confidence. The girls spoke warmly of the common rooms provided for the year groups, which made an excellent base for social interaction as well as providing opportunities for small responsibilities.
- 4.5 The art department makes a very considerable contribution to the cultural environment in which the pupils learn; girls' work is displayed to great advantage throughout the school and especially in the entrance to the new performing arts centre. The pupils are able to develop their cultural understanding and enjoyment through drama productions such as the recent performance, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Their participation in musical activities in school makes further contribution. Their cultural and social awareness is extended by numerous visits, for example in the current academic year: the senior choir visit to Barcelona; theatre productions for those studying in English literature *Hamlet* and *The Woman in Black*; a Year 11 GCSE history visit to Berlin; and visits for pupils in Years 10 and 12 studying art and textiles to the Tate Modern and Wallace Collection. The wide range of nationalities amongst the pupils enriches their experience. They respect one another's cultures

and traditions while learning from each other in an overwhelmingly happy and convivial atmosphere. Unusually, the EAL teacher is one of the pastoral team that cares for the boarders. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent at St Teresa's.

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

- 4.6 The school is successful in its aim 'to maintain a happy, disciplined and structured environment and to promote dignity, equality and respect'. Staff provide effective support and guidance for the pupils and relationships are positive. Form tutors are involved with target-setting and monitoring of activities; they also provide considerable support to pupils in organising their studies. All teachers state they know the pupils very well, and girls similarly expressed considerable respect and affection for the majority of their teachers. The role of the head of year has been developed in particular to increase effective contact between school and parents. The work of teachers in providing strong pastoral care for pupils is augmented by the very considerable contribution made by the chaplain, supported also by the school matron and the weekly visits of the counsellor. The pupil diary is very well put together and contains much helpful information for the girls about support. Pupils are also encouraged to support one another. The newly established peer mentoring system incorporates appropriate training. One of the Year 11 mentors expressed considerable enthusiasm for the scheme and reported good progress in organisational skills in her younger mentee.
- 4.7 The school has effective procedures for promoting good behaviour and guarding against harassment and bullying; all pupils questioned stated that they felt safe at school and knew what they would do if they encountered bullying. In times of trouble all felt they could turn to a member of staff. The school has procedures and a policy in place for dealing constructively with any unacceptable behaviour.
- 4.8 The safeguarding policy is compliant with requirements and implemented successfully. Training has been rigorous and is carefully recorded by the deputy head (pastoral), who is in overall charge. All staff have undertaken appropriate child protection training. Many staff are qualified in first aid and girls who are unwell are cared for by the school matron in an appropriately designated room. The admissions and attendance registers are properly maintained and correctly stored, and attendance is very strictly monitored at all times of the school day.
- 4.9 The school has the appropriate policies governing all required aspects of health and safety, including the necessary measures to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. Appropriate risk assessments are in place. The school has an effective accessibility plan that was not in place at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are encouraged to develop healthy eating habits and take regular exercise; fresh fruit at lunchtime is plentiful. Several pupils commented favourably on lunches, saying that they had improved over recent years; others were less enthusiastic.

4.(c) The quality of boarding education

- 4.10 The boarding experience is good and contributes positively to the development of boarding pupils. In interviews, girls spoke passionately about the way in which boarding is a valuable part of their education and their lives. It contributes in developing the whole person and as such fulfils the specific aims of both boarding and the school. The most recent Ofsted boarding welfare inspection, which took place in September 2009, rated the quality of boarding as good overall and outstanding in helping the pupils achieve well and enjoy what they do. No regulatory shortcomings were identified by the Ofsted inspection team. The school has acted on the recommendation made in the subsequent report.
- 4.11 Relationships within the boarding community are warm and supportive; they cross the divide of different year groups. Older girls operate a buddy system to 'look out' for the younger girls that is impressive and pays testimony to the family atmosphere that boarding tries hard to foster. The boarders have good access to boarding staff. Staff and boarders' rooms are adjacent to one another, with easy availability should pupils need it. The quality of care and support from dedicated staff who know the pupils well contributes significantly to the happiness and security of the girls.
- 4.12 After school and at weekends there is a good variety of activities. In the evenings, when study has finished, pupils have a number of activities including drama, cookery, dance and craft, with regular trips being organised. Week-ends include a more relaxed routine, with organised visits to local towns on Saturday, and the celebration of the Eucharist in the evening. Sundays include activities such as horse-riding, tennis and golf, when the weather allows, and a formal dinner in the evening. The boarders are confident that their requests for activities or outings are granted whenever possible. Girls use some time for additional personal study. Mention was made of occasional frustrations with the computer facilities and internet availability, although pupils recognise the difficulties posed by the location of the school.
- 4.13 'News from Boarding' appears regularly in the *St Teresa's Times*. The articles help to raise the profile of boarding and let the wider reading audience know what is happening in this aspect of school life.
- 4.14 The quality of accommodation has improved as a result of the recent refurbishment programme. Rooms are smart and clean, and places which the girls can make their own. Large, attractive common rooms, equipped with kettles, toasters and televisions, laundry rooms and a games room allow for a comfortable communal life.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

5.1 The governors are the guardians of the Catholic ethos of the school and are fully supportive of the spiritual framework within which the growth, development and needs of the pupils can flourish. They give good strategic leadership, are forward thinking and are committed to providing the school with new facilities, like the swimming pool and the performing arts centre. Their careful financial planning currently enables them to be making provision for a major new facility. The chair of governors meets the headmistress regularly, and all governors are willing, from their range of expertise, to offer sound advice and guidance. They are well aware of their responsibilities to see that the school meets the regulatory requirements for independent schools. With effective oversight, they review the school policies and make sure that the school fulfils its duties of child protection, in recruitment and in matters of health and safety. They have finance and education committees to support the work of the school. Governors attend major school functions and productions, and are proud of the school.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

5.2 The headmistress and senior management team provide strong leadership. In accordance with the aims of the school, they are determined that each girl should be offered the care and encouragement to achieve the best of which she is capable. For this purpose their planning provides opportunities for the individual, as well as fostering the Christian community that sustains all those who belong to it, whatever their faith. The spiritual growth of the pupils is central to their concept of leadership and management; it is integral to their vision for the school.

5.3 Within the school there are clear management structures, designed to facilitate effective communication and to operate systems that track the pupils' progress and meet their needs. Heads of year and heads of department implement the policies of the senior management team as well as contributing to them. Working parties of staff have been entrusted with the task of reviewing various aspects of the education provided, such as the curriculum, and their findings are valuable in informing future actions. Academically and pastorally, staff roles are clearly defined, so that, although leadership comes from the top, information passes helpfully throughout the organisation. It is evident from the standard of the pupils' personal development that they are well served by the clear educational direction set by the school's management.

5.4 Management is successful in securing high quality teaching and non-teaching staff, and in training them carefully in their roles in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. The school has thorough arrangements for checking the suitability of staff (including volunteers), supply staff and governors. The management team oversees a well-established performance review system, now including non-teaching staff.

5.5 The previous inspection report advised the school to undertake more work on its development planning and the school has responded effectively to this. Its present development plan has proved to be a very useful document, and is still helpful to identify current and immediate plans, but it is limited in its future scope. The school is aware of the need to devise a new plan, and to review and update it regularly. Much work has been carried out in preparation. Staff working parties have been

concentrating on areas such as the curriculum, and the senior management team has been working on strategic plans.

- 5.6 Sound management is evident in all areas of the school. Non-teaching and administrative staff work hard to facilitate the work of the school. Care is evident in the clean, well-tended buildings and the beautiful grounds.

5.(c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians

- 5.7 Links with parents, carers and guardians are a notable strength of the school. The school sends out informative and helpful documentation, and communicates with parents through letters, publications and email. Parents receive half-termly newsletters and detailed reports. Pupils in examination years receive a grade sheet or full report each term. Other years receive full reports each term except when there is a parents' evening. The newsletter keeps parents informed about what has happened at the school and letters tell them about what is to come. There are helpful booklets about subject choices and about school policies. Parents' evenings occur regularly: there is one formal and one informal evening per year group each year.
- 5.8 Communication between staff and parents through email is common. The heads of year provide a point of contact between the school and parents. Members of the parents' association, Friends of St Teresa's, bring general points about school routine to the senior management team freely and with ease.
- 5.9 The parents' association is thriving. It raises funds and organises social and informal events. Representatives attend events such as open days and arrange a drinks evening for new parents in September. Further help is given by parents with careers days and work experience. Recently, invitations were extended to parents of those in Year 10 to attend a revision skills evening. Year 10 parents also participate in some trips, which shows a constructive relationship with parents, in accordance with the aims of the school. The automatic texting system, and parental links via email and the school website are well received as sources of up-to-date information. Important school policies, such as for child protection and the complaints procedure, are published on the website as well as being available in hard copy. Responses from the parental questionnaire were positive. Where there were occasional negative comments from parents, they have been considered and taken into account in this report. Parents are well satisfied with the education their daughters are receiving.

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

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 and assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding houses and 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

Mrs Deborah Forbes	Reporting Inspector
Mr David Dawswell	Senior Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC)
Mrs Roberta Georghiou	Senior Team Inspector (Head, GSA)
Mr Sean Philpott	Senior Team Inspector (Head of School (Middle), SHMIS)