

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## INSPECTION REPORT ON

### **Queen's College, London**

Full Name of the School	<b>Queen's College, London</b>
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Age Range	<b>3 to 18</b>
Gender	<b>Girls</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>25<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2008</b>

This inspection report follows the framework laid down by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI). The inspection was carried out under the arrangements of the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership. It was also carried out under Section 162A(1)(b) of the Education Act 2002 as amended by the Education Act 2005, under the provisions of which the Secretary of State for Education and Skills accredited ISI as the body approved for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to ISC Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended with effect from January 2005 and May 2007.

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.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Characteristics of the School

- 1.1 Queen's College, London is an independent day school for girls, which opened in 1848. The college has been on its present site in Harley Street since its foundation by Professor F D Maurice, Victorian academic, social and educational reformer, and prominent Christian Socialist. Five years after its inception the college was granted a royal charter. It was the first institution to provide academic qualifications for women. The college occupies four 18<sup>th</sup> century listed town houses, appropriately converted to meet today's educational requirements, but with limited play space. Games take place in a range of local facilities including Regent's Park, about half a mile from the college.
- 1.2 In 2002 the governing council set up a preparatory school, acquiring and adapting Georgian buildings in nearby Portland Place; further expansion took place in 2005 when an adjoining building was acquired. The whole college now educates girls aged 3 to 18 years. It has a Christian foundation, but admits pupils of all faiths and none. Traditionally, the catchment has been the north London area and the ethnic mix is typical of a London day school. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds but most of the parents are engaged in professional and business occupations. The present principal took up her post in September 1999 and the headmistress of the preparatory school was appointed when the school opened in September 2002. Since the last inspection of the college, in May 2002, there have been systematic additions to resources, including the re-building and extension of the Pfeiffer Hall, additional investment in ICT, and considerable refurbishment of a number of teaching facilities and classrooms.
- 1.3 Entry to the preparatory school, which is run separately from the college, is on a first come first served basis at ages 3 and 4, and by assessment at Year 1 and above. Admission to the college is primarily at the age of 11, and there are also several entrants and leavers each year in other age groups. In Year 7, girls are admitted by interview and tests in mathematics and English, the papers being those agreed within Group 1 of the North London Girls' Schools Consortium. No automatic right of entry is given to preparatory school girls, and about half Year 6 leavers go on to the college, after sitting the Consortium papers. In the special circumstances of central London, some pupil turnover occurs, with more girls joining and leaving at different ages than is normal elsewhere. Entry to the college is from both the independent and maintained sectors, and over three-fifths of all new pupils come from the independent sector. The requirement for entry into Year 12 is at least six grades Cs in GCSE. The majority of pupils stay on into Years 12 and 13; and recently up to 15 of them each year have left from Year 11 although, annually, there are up to 10 new A-level entrants. Nearly all Year 13 pupils go on to higher education, mainly in this country.
- 1.4 Results of standardised tests in Year 7 indicate that there is some spread of ability but, overall, pupils are above the national average, with around two-thirds in the top quarter of the ability range. Thus, where pupils are performing in line with their abilities, results in public examinations are expected to be above those in all maintained schools.
- 1.5 At the time of the inspection there were 550 girls in the two sections of the college; of these there were 187 in the prep school, from Foundation Stage to Year 6, and 279 in Years 7 to 11. There were 84 girls in Years 12 and 13. Applications have increased in recent years, especially at the age of 11. Total pupil numbers, including the prep school, are over a third higher than when the previous inspection took place.

- 1.6 The college has identified over 60 pupils as having learning difficulties, some of whom receive special assistance from a visiting teacher on a short term basis. The most usual needs are mild dyslexia and dyspraxia. There are few pupils for whom English is not their principal language, but none requires special help. English as an additional language support (EAL) is offered if it proves to be necessary.
- 1.7 The whole college aims for academic excellence, “for its own sake, rather than the pursuit of marks.” It measures its success by the development of each individual. It values personal integrity and the discernment to deal responsibly with the wider world. It encourages teaching that inspires pupils, stimulates intellectual curiosity and rigour; it promotes the ability to make informed judgements, and helps pupils to know how to think rather than what to think. It encourages pupils’ self-reliance and independence of mind, it promotes self discipline and the determination to outstrip expectations, and it strongly supports the development of imagination and the courage to take risks.
- 1.8 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following tables.

***Prep School***

School	NC name
Lower Kindergarten	Foundation Stage
Upper Kindergarten	Foundation Stage
Form 1	Year 1
Form 11	Year 2
Form 111	Year 3
Form 1V	Year 4
Form V	Year 5
Form V1	Year 6

***College***

College	NC name
Class 3	Year 7
Class 2	Year 8
Class 1	Year 9
1 Juniors	Year 10
11 Juniors	Year 11
1 Seniors	Year 12
11 Seniors	Year 13

## 2. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

### The Educational Experience Provided

- 2.1 The college and the preparatory school provide an educational experience of high quality which has improved since the time of the last inspection in 2002. The college meets its aim of pursuing high academic achievement, ensuring that girls learn to think for themselves, develop their imagination, and show determination to exceed expectations.
- 2.2 The college is highly effective in its contribution to linguistic, mathematical, scientific, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative development. Strong emphasis is placed on the skills of speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy, and a wide range of activities are offered which contribute to physical, social and spiritual development. In the pre-inspection questionnaires parents indicated outstandingly high levels of satisfaction with the curricular provision.
- 2.3 Curricular planning is effective and schemes of work ensure some continuity and progression across the phases. A wide range of subjects is available to all pupils. Girls have the opportunity to benefit from many extra-curricular activities, and they are able to take advantage of numerous educational and cultural opportunities in London that strongly enrich the curriculum.
- 2.4 Some provision is made for girls with mainly minor learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) and, overall, it is effective. Those identified with dyslexia and other difficulties are given assistance, and in the college additional time is made available for girls in external examinations. Staff are made aware of pupils who have difficulties and learning support staff maintain liaison with parents and outside organisations. For those with particular requirements extra tuition is organised mainly outside lesson time. At the time of inspection no pupils required support in English as an additional language. A gifted and talented policy has been drawn up, pupils are being identified, and it is recognised that this is an area for further development. In several subjects extension work is provided; this also occurs in some extra-curricular activities, for example, in the literary society where academic abilities and interests are much advanced.

### *Prep School*

- 2.5 Considerable flexibility exists within the curriculum. Despite the pressure of examination preparation for part of Years 5 and 6, curricular breadth is maintained. Following the 11+ examination, additional lessons in drama, physical education and sculpture are added to the timetable, and Spanish is also introduced. Design and technology (DT) is not on the timetable but elements of it are taught within art and design, and science. The school feels that the loss of some skills and evaluation in this subject may be worth the sacrifice so that Latin, fencing and chess can be included. However, the place of DT in the curriculum is under review.
- 2.6 Emphasis is placed on core subjects, with strength in both English and mathematics where some development planning has taken place. The profile of modern languages has been increased, and efforts are being made to help girls to become more independent learners, especially following the refurbishment of the library and information and communication technology (ICT) suite. Despite the lack of outdoor space, it has been possible to provide all the girls with opportunities to exercise daily, and options include ice skating and dance. Local sports facilities are limited but are used wherever possible.

- 2.7 Personal, social health, and citizenship education (PSHCE) is embedded within the taught curriculum, and in the ethos of the school, and strongly contributes to the girls' all-round education. Some staff and pupils come from other parts of the world and the sharing of different perspectives provides significant learning experiences for all. Important recent initiatives such as the improvement of school meals and recycling are strongly supported by the pupils. The school's aim to promote discernment to deal responsibly with the wider world is nurtured through topic work, notably in geography and science. Pupils are much encouraged to contribute to school life which assists their personal development. Older girls showed a growing awareness in sharing their knowledge with inspectors of topics such as British politics and the values of recycling to address problems of resource depletion.
- 2.8 Girls are thoroughly prepared for each phase of their education. At the end of the Foundation Stage they are confident about moving to Year 1 as they are already academically and personally integrated into the school routine. Similarly, pupils move smoothly from Year 2 to Year 3 and settle happily to new routines. All Year 6 girls are encouraged to become more independent and are given responsibility as they reach the top of the school, some as prefects or sports captains. Year 6 pupils and their parents receive detailed advice about secondary school options, and girls are well prepared to gain access not only to the college but also to a variety of other selective senior schools.
- 2.9 The curriculum is primarily subject based, and specialist teaching is increased as pupils move up the school. Work schemes and lesson plans exist in each subject, but they are not fully formalized to ensure that all lessons have clear learning objectives and assessment built in to inform future learning. Some liaison with staff from the college ensures progression in curricular planning.
- 2.10 The provision of extra-curricular activities is remarkably broad considering some of the constraints imposed by location and a restricted school site. Thirty-three after-school clubs operate during British Summer Time and cater for a wide range of interests including aerobics, cookery, various sports, reeling, Spanish and music making. The curriculum contains activities such as chess, fencing, public speaking and dance, and four-fifths of girls above the Foundation Stage have individual musical instrument tuition. A variety of outside speakers visit the school and the curriculum is also enriched by a range of outside trips. The school uses local resources such as nearby museums and places of worship and undertakes visits to York and Bath. Outdoor pursuits are catered for by ski trips from Year 4 and residential visits to the Isle of Wight in Year 5 and Normandy in Year 6.
- 2.11 Learning support is available for a very small number of pupils who have been identified with LDD, and is underpinned by advantageous staff-pupil ratios. However, the programme relies heavily on informal procedures and is not fully established on a formal basis. Individual education plans (IEPs) are not always used in the classroom to inform teacher planning and to provide pupils with effective targets.

### *College*

- 2.12 The educational programme is geared to the development of the individual within a very friendly atmosphere and highly constructive staff-pupil relationships, reinforced by small class sizes. Girls are able to acquire and develop skills across a wide range of disciplines. The number of subjects available in Years 12 and 13 for AS and A2 is extensive, given the size of the school, and a wide range of modern languages is on offer from Year 8 onwards. ICT provision is good and is constantly being improved. Timetabled lessons are supplemented by the opportunity to gain the European Computer Driving Licence. ICT is used primarily for independent study, research and word processing. Additional ICT facilities in individual classrooms are further benefiting teaching and learning.

- 2.13 Special efforts are being made to enhance the quality and quantity of sport. The college is embarking on its first overseas netball tour this year, and this has resulted in more regular games practice. Increased access to activities such as dance, fitness, ski trips, and the formation of a running club aimed at participation in the London mini-marathon, all highlight progress in this area. Over thirty clubs and other extra-curricular activities operate mainly at lunchtime. High quality community service and much charitable fund raising occur, and an extensive PSHCE programme is delivered by staff and outside speakers, and much good choral singing, music, musical theatre, drama and dance are on offer.
- 2.14 Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education. The quality of careers advice is good and is reflected in the very positive comments received from pupils at interview and in the quality of specialist documentation available. Girls are helped to select external examination subjects wisely, a voluntary work experience programme exists in Year 11, and aptitude and other testing programmes are available to help girls to make informed degree and career choices. The college has university links and individual interviews with careers, pastoral and senior staff help to ensure that girls are fully briefed about higher educational opportunities.
- 2.15 The curriculum is well planned and supported by clear schemes of work. Recent changes include the provision of IGCSE in English and mathematics. Design and technology has not been introduced as suggested in the last inspection, but more emphasis is given to textiles at GCSE and A level. The wide choice of modern languages has been retained, with additional science in Years 7 and 8, and extended physical education, dance and games provision in Years 10 and 11. Psychology is now an A level options choice.
- 2.16 Extra-curricular provision is of good quality and several club and society activities were seen during the inspection including an excellent modern languages club, Lingo Flamingo, and a lively evening performance of scenes from the opera, *Dido and Aeneas*. There are strong links with the community and a great awareness by girls of those less fortunate than themselves, illustrated by a fine drama presentation on the homeless.
- 2.17 The school meets well the curricular needs of pupils requiring learning support and EAL assistance. All Year 7 girls are screened for learning difficulties and those in need of support receive free expert help from a part-time specialist. An LDD register is compiled by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), who liaises closely with teaching staff over the requirements of particular pupils. However, no IEPs are produced for LDD pupils.

### ***Whole School***

- 2.18 The college meets the regulatory requirements for the curriculum [Standard 1].

## **Pupils' Learning and Achievements**

- 2.19 Pupils throughout the college are good learners and achieve high standards. They effectively develop the essential skills and attitudes for work and study. The achievements of prep school pupils have improved since its foundation, and the college has enhanced the standards displayed at the time of the last inspection, achieving more active learning in lessons, better results in external examinations, and greater cooperative endeavour. The whole college meets its aim of encouraging in all pupils self reliance and independence of mind.
- 2.20 Pupils establish a solid base of learning from which they are able to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in subjects and activities. They develop very good skills and attitudes towards their work. Girls think and act critically and creatively; high quality areas of performance are achieved in the creative arts and orally in both the prep school and the college, and in classics competitions in the latter. No significant difference is apparent in the relative attainment of girls in different classes within the same year.

### ***Prep School***

- 2.21 The school does not enter pupils for national tests. The pass rate of Year 6 girls in independent selective secondary school entrance examinations over the last three years has been exceptionally high, and discussion with pupils and parents helps them to select appropriate schools. An increasing number of girls are now applying for and gaining entry to the college.
- 2.22 Active learning strategies enable pupils to apply their knowledge effectively. In a dedicated science laboratory, Year 6 girls undertook critical and scientific analysis of liquid samples to investigate the mystery of, 'Who ate the cakes?' They reasoned intelligently, recorded their findings and drew conclusions based on the evidence collected. All the girls are highly articulate and they listen effectively. When answering questions in a Foundation Stage lesson, pupils described clearly the properties of Arctic icebergs. Year 6 pupils, in interview, carefully articulated their views on ways to promote healthy eating and explained measures the school was taking to protect and promote healthy living. They all spoke with confidence, clarity and conviction.
- 2.23 Pupils' written work shows clear progression so that by Year 6 it is well structured, creative and original and reflects a variety of perspectives in a range of subjects. Opportunities exist for girls to extend their literacy skills across the curriculum, for example in history and religious education. The girls show good standards in numeracy. Pupils of all ages apply their mathematical knowledge effectively, and Foundation Stage pupils use counting drills very well as part of daily registration at the start of morning school. Year 6 pupils were observed applying a variety of learned mathematical skills by working on an interior design project to design and draw to scale a flat, fully equip it, and keep careful track of the cost.
- 2.24 All pupils enjoy developing computing capabilities in ICT lessons and learn to apply their knowledge and skills effectively. Opportunities to use this knowledge across the curriculum are growing and in Years 5 and 6 some girls are able to use programs with confidence to record the results of science experiments. In the Foundation Stage, achievement is high in all aspects of learning. Particular examples of good learning were seen in an art lesson featuring Henry Moore sculptures, and in science.
- 2.25 Although the ethos of the school is essentially non-competitive, the girls enjoy challenge and team activities. A limited number of inter-school netball and rounders matches are played. The pupils are entered for national competitions in the Junior Schools Mathematics Challenge, in chess, art, and fencing, they take English Speaking Board and music

examinations and graded tests in dance, swimming, fencing and ice skating. Individual and team achievements are good.

- 2.26 On arrival at lessons, girls settle quickly and quietly, displaying the essential skills and attitudes they need for effective work and study. Pupils of all ages enjoy learning and work very well together. They show keen concentration, enthusiasm, and enjoyment of lessons, all of which contributes to the disciplined calmness of their classrooms and to their achievements. A positive attitude, even in the youngest pupils, reflects well on their approach to learning.

### *College*

- 2.27 The college has set and achieved general targets aimed at improving results at GCSE and A level. Girls' performance in GCSE is good in relation to their abilities, and their progress from entry at Year 7 to GCSE, is well above national norms. Since the last inspection GCSE results have improved steadily, with a higher proportion of A\* and A grades. Slight variations have occurred in results over the last four years, although in 2007 the school achieved its second best proportion of top GCSE grades. Performance has been similar to that in selective maintained schools. At A level, pupils' attainment is in line with their abilities, and A-level grades have continued to improve overall, but results have not followed an entirely rising trend although, in 2007, A-B grades were the highest ever. In the past three years results have been above the national average for all maintained schools, and similar to those in selective maintained schools.
- 2.28 Pupils have good subject-based skills and develop sound knowledge in all disciplines from an early age. Pupils' work shows a good command of the written word and an ability and willingness to communicate clearly and extensively in writing. They speak confidently and fluently and exhibit well-honed listening and reading skills. This was particularly evident in English, religious studies and economics, and some Year 13 girls displayed assured oral and presentation skills in two extra-curricular clubs – Model United Nations and Lingo Flamingo.
- 2.29 Evidence was observed of pupils demonstrating sound critical and creative thinking and understanding. An excellent example was seen in a Year 13 mathematics lesson in which students derived equations from first principles. Numeracy is developed throughout the school and girls show effective application of mathematical skills in other subjects. Girls use ICT to word-process work and to conduct internet searches. They work diligently in the particularly well organised and resourced libraries, and the ICT rooms are used extensively outside lessons and pupils, particularly in Years 12 and 13, communicate with their teachers by email. Only limited examples of use of ICT by the girls in lessons to enhance learning were observed although a good example of data logging was seen in a Year 13 physics lesson, and there was very effective use of one of the newly installed languages laboratories by girls in Year 10.
- 2.30 Individual pupils have achieved well in a range of activities. Annually, girls are successful in music examinations, English Speaking Board examinations and in the last academic year Trinity College drama examinations were also entered with success. In Year 12 Young Enterprise teams set up interesting businesses and achieved good results in the supporting qualifications, whilst a number of girls in Year 13 have gained GAP year Pilkington Travel awards. Collectively, girls enjoy musical theatre performances, and achieve particular success in Greek and Latin reading competitions and Classical Association public speaking competitions. They are highly articulate in debate and support their arguments with reason and passion. The girls enjoy participating in team games, especially netball and rounders. The summer 2008 Australia tour has provided a focus for greater all-round involvement and commitment to sport in the college. Girls are entered for national mathematics competitions

and have had success in achieving a Gold Award in the Intermediate Challenge and proceeding to the next national round.

- 2.31 Girls show good independent learning skills and make use of private study and opportunities to work in the expertly staffed library. Work is well organised and incorporates a range of styles including note-taking, work sheet completion, and poster and project work. Many girls are skilful note takers, although inevitably some are more accurate and detailed in their recording than others
- 2.32 Pupils are willing to seek help from individual staff both inside and outside lessons, particularly when marking suggests that further clarification or explanation is required. In Years 7 to 9 a timetabled library lesson encourages them to read widely as well as nurturing their information skills and opening their minds to new resources and ideas.
- 2.33 Girls are confident in their learning and clearly enjoy studying and working co-operatively when opportunities arise. Good examples of group work were observed in Year 8 science, PSHCE and drama, Year 11 religious studies, and in a number of modern language and English lessons. Extra-curricular activities such as Cross-Examined and the Science Club also illustrated the girls' willingness to work together.
- 2.34 Pupils settle down quickly and apply themselves conscientiously both in lessons and when working independently on assignments. Girls enjoy their learning and the close, positive relationships between staff and pupils provide encouragement, foster high aspirations and clearly contribute to the enjoyment of learning.

### **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils**

- 2.35 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness of pupils is good, reflecting the central aim of nurturing self-discipline, personal integrity and the discernment to deal responsibly with the wider world. The prep school and the college promote awareness of the needs of others, foster a co-operative caring and non-competitive atmosphere and encourage respect for all. This personal awareness, which was much praised in the college in the last inspection, continues to be strongly developed.
- 2.36 Girls have a keen sense of right and wrong, and are able to discuss ethical issues with knowledge and insight. They are much involved in the college community, show a full commitment to it, are confident in their own identities, and accept others as they find them.
- 2.37 Pupils benefit from the Christian ethos and value system upon which the college was founded, and the varied cultures and faiths coexist very successfully. They also gain from corporate activities. For example, the college parliament enables pupils, elected by their year groups, to put forward the views of their peers to representatives of the college community, a responsibility they carry out confidently, thoughtfully and maturely.

### ***Prep School***

- 2.38 Throughout the prep school, an atmosphere of care and respect for one another is present. Daily assemblies bring the whole school together and build community identity. High quality whole-school assemblies led by the headmistress and pupils, and good class assemblies, were observed during the inspection. The tenets of the Christian faith are used as an example for pupils' behaviour. Respect for other faiths, based on shared knowledge and understanding, is a key component in religious studies. Self-worth is celebrated regularly and those who do well are frequently praised in lessons, in the weekly newsletter and publicly in assemblies.

- 2.39 A strong sense of self-awareness and social and moral responsibility were evident at interview. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 stated that the school rules and sanctions were both fair and necessary for everyone's well being. The girls must move around the large and complex buildings for their teaching, and this encourages them to plan ahead to ensure they are appropriately equipped for lessons. Most pupils are given class or school responsibility, and older girls enjoy being prefects and house captains, and take pride in helping younger ones. Good behaviour was observed throughout the inspection both in and out of the classroom. Speakers from the community talk to older pupils about drugs issues and personal relationships as part of their PSHCE studies which also include opportunities for pupils to study environmental issues, as in the Year 4 visit to a re-cycling centre.
- 2.40 Pupils are highly socially aware and there is a real sense of mutual supportiveness. The house system, through which a great deal of charity work is organised, enables girls to mix across the age groups. Many charities are supported and pupils are encouraged to remember those less fortunate than themselves. Last year's 'readathon' supported people with disabilities in China and the charity organizer showed the awe-struck pupils a film of how their money had been spent. Houses also organize sports, drama and music competitions. The school places an emphasis on all girls being involved in performance. Residential trips enable pupils to mix with other girls than their peers, promoting social living skills. Pupils are very well aware of their London environment; the senior tutor of the college talks to Year 6 about public institutions, and the workings of parliament and government, which is linked into their history scheme of work. Visits are organized to the London Fire Brigade, and the local park is well used and enjoyed, particularly by the younger classes.
- 2.41 Pupils respond very positively to the many opportunities provided for their cultural development. They are enthusiastic about educational visits to the British Museum, to the Ragged School Museum, and to well known City churches and other places of worship. Pupils successfully learn about other cultures in whole-school celebrations of, for example, Chinese New Year and Australia Day and through the Year 6 residential trip to France. One pupil commented on how much she loved the Mandarin club. The girls are very aware of the proximity of diplomatic buildings to the school, and commented knowledgeably about on-going political protests at various embassies. In a Year 6 lesson cultural awareness was enhanced by looking at displays of Japanese calligraphy and African art.

### *College*

- 2.42 The girls have a well-developed spiritual awareness and are aware of a wide range of stimuli to foster their spiritual growth. Christian and Jewish assemblies are provided, and deliberations on other world religions occur in religious studies lessons. Academic departments have run recent visits to St Paul's Cathedral, to a Hindu temple, to a mosque and also to the Jewish cemetery in Krakow and St Mary's pro-cathedral in Dublin. The schemes of work of several subjects were seen to have spiritual content, notably in history of art, (where lessons were linked to the study of medieval religious painting), in several history and English lessons, and also in geography, where the desecration of the rain forest was viewed from the spiritual perspective of the native Indians.
- 2.43 Pupils take responsibility for their own behaviour and respect the college's rules. They have a keen moral sense, and are courteous and respectful towards others. They are acutely socially aware, and contribute to community life with initiative and enthusiasm. They benefit from the comprehensive PSHCE course, a part of which addresses moral and ethical matters within programmes delivered principally by form tutors, but also by outside speakers. During the inspection ethical aspects of animal experimentation were raised in a science lesson, the ability to distinguish right from wrong was discussed in work on Auschwitz, and a powerful view of the plight of the homeless was presented in a Year 8 drama lesson.

- 2.44 Pupils are socially committed and have a sense of personal duty and are aware that this involves service to the college community. Each form is encouraged to engage in a range of corporate activities and senior girls become monitors to the junior forms. Girls naturally accept responsibility and express a keenness to 'put something back'. Charitable giving is extensive and is mainly organised by the girls themselves. Last year, forty different organisations benefited from their generosity, ranging from a local community centre for handicapped children to the funding of health workers in Darfur.
- 2.45 Girls have many cultural opportunities and have a wide cultural awareness. The college is proud to be harmoniously multi-cultural, and actively pursues one of its aims that girls should be able to deal responsibly with the wider world. Pupils are able to study six modern European and Asian languages. Several departments organise cultural trips within the metropolis and there are history tours to Eastern Europe and language courses on the continent.
- 2.46 Within the college, some practical music making, drama and art expose the girls to the creativity of different cultures. The popular Model United Nations enhances pupil awareness of some social, political and cultural concerns in the wider world.

#### ***Whole School***

- 2.47 The college meets the regulatory requirements for the spiritual, moral social and cultural development of pupils [Standard 2].

#### **The Quality of Teaching (Including Assessment)**

- 2.48 Standards of teaching are good, and occasionally outstanding, and enable significant advances to take place in pupils' learning. They strongly support the aims of the whole college to develop intellectual curiosity and academic rigour, and an ability to make informed judgements. The quality of teaching acknowledged in the college in the last inspection report has been improved upon, with increased sharing of good practice, more systematic planning of tasks, and the promotion of more active learning. Teaching is well planned, indicates a good understanding of the aptitudes and needs of pupils and effective teaching methods are employed. Teaching ensures that girls behave responsibly and well, it fosters enjoyable learning, and promotes excellent pupil-teacher relationships. Teaching is becoming more adapted to the needs of pupils with LDD. Overall, teaching throughout the college ensures that pupils of all abilities make good progress, achieve high standards, and know how to think for themselves.

#### ***Prep School***

- 2.49 Teaching is good and supports pupils of all ages and abilities strongly, and enables them to acquire new knowledge and make progress. In almost all lessons teaching is a strong factor in pupils' achievement. It challenges pupils to recall and use prior learning, encourages them to persevere and insists on high standards of presentation and accuracy.

- 2.50 In the most effective lessons outstanding teaching inspires in pupils a love of learning and a desire continually to aim higher. Teachers are keen for their pupils to succeed by providing a variety of activities in a challenging yet co-operative environment. The methods used by many teachers maintain the interest of pupils and successfully challenge them both to think and to apply themselves well, academically and creatively.
- 2.51 Teachers have high expectations and encourage girls to answer questions clearly and express their views with confidence. A question box outside the science room gives the opportunity for girls to pose a question which Year 6 pupils will research and respond to, presenting their findings on the adjacent answering board. Topic work, involving cross-curricular links, was observed in religious studies and history, English and history, and in science and ICT. Girls in the Foundation Stage talked confidently about how they found their information sources, when discussing their Arctic project.
- 2.52 The best lesson plans showed clearly what is taught in relation to school policies, and the most effective illustrated the use of a range of relevant teaching approaches. Informal assessment of the responses pupils make to their work guides planning for future lessons. Within lessons, teachers balance the promotion of skills such as reading and writing with activities that sustain pupils' interest, and encourage them to manage their own learning. Children in the Foundation Stage made rapid progress because the teacher challenged them to stretch the words they were writing in order to hear the sounds within them. In Year 1 the teacher's imaginative use of a whole-class game, to recapitulate on key words from a spelling list, demonstrated a very good understanding of pupils' needs, especially when clues directed at different pupils were adjusted to meet individual needs.
- 2.53 Younger pupils receive appropriate in-class support much assisted by the very good staff-pupil ratio. Older pupils, with particular needs, can have additional specialist support, on site during the school day, paid for by parents. Throughout the school, teachers motivate individual pupils with praise and encouragement and, by use of the rewards system, acknowledge good work and effort, and inspire pupils to aim higher. Some lessons displayed appropriate differentiated activities and a good standard of learning. However, the planning of lessons is not formalised, and not all girls have clear learning objectives based on assessments that inform future learning. Older pupils are taught by subject specialists, and such teaching has been increasingly introduced to good effect lower down the school. From the outset, pupils' skills and expertise in fields such as music and art develop rapidly owing to high expectations and the specialist skills of staff. Girls love their French lessons, and an element of drama helps to bring them alive.
- 2.54 Teaching is supported by very good resources, and makes appropriate use of them. The refurbished and well equipped ICT suite is beginning to be used effectively for the teaching of skills and for support work in some other subjects, particularly science. The new Foundation Stage library and the welcoming main library, managed by a part-time librarian with some assistance from Year 6 pupils, are yet to be fully used for independent learning. Specialist, appropriately equipped teaching rooms enhance the pupils' learning environment.
- 2.55 Teaching includes regular and thorough assessment of pupils' work, although nationally standardised tests are not used as a basis to compare pupil attainment. In some instances, assessment test results are recorded carefully and assist planning, but this is not consistently spread throughout the school. Discussion with pupils revealed that marking is often of an informal, verbal nature with praise and encouragement being given, and being much valued. However, no direct guidance is given to teaching staff about how work is to be marked or what pupils need to do to improve performance.

### *College*

- 2.56 Teaching enables pupils of all abilities and ages to acquire the skills and knowledge they need to learn. Informal procedures exist to ensure that their special needs are met across the curriculum but there are no IEPs. Teaching encourages pupils to acquire new knowledge and enjoy learning. Pupils were observed to respond more positively to those lessons where careful and imaginative planning had led to a variety of approaches and stimuli and in which pupils were expected to be actively engaged intellectually, physically or creatively. For example, outstanding teaching was observed in a Year 12 highly participative classical civilisation lesson on Greek architecture and in a Year 11 religious studies revision lesson on philosophy where pupils worked particularly well in groups. Teaching became less effective where it was over-reliant upon teacher exposition and worksheets. In such instances pupils had little opportunity to think for themselves, and the ready provision of material discouraged the pursuit of independent learning.
- 2.57 Teaching demonstrates high levels of knowledge accompanied by a marked enthusiasm for the subjects. Opportunities for teachers to reflect on good practice are available both informally and through in-service training. Lesson planning is good overall, taking account of the different needs of pupils, including those with LDD. In the very best lessons, additional provision is provided for gifted and talented pupils.
- 2.58 Teaching shows a good understanding of the aptitudes and needs of the pupils and teachers know their pupils well. This was particularly evident in some skilfully directed questioning in a Year 13 English literature textual analysis lesson on *Frankenstein* in which the teacher clearly valued and then developed the viewpoints of her pupils. Similarly a stepped approach to a challenging task in a Year 7 mathematics lesson on vertical and horizontal line equations demonstrated the teacher's careful extension of her pupils' understanding. Pupils also recognised the willingness of teachers to support them beyond class time. All those questioned said that they would receive such help if ever they needed it. One senior pupil speaking of the consistently good teaching she had experienced in English said, "It gives you that drive for excellence," - a goal entirely in keeping with the aims of the college.
- 2.59 Teaching is well supported with resources. A considerable investment has been made in ICT equipment, and many classrooms have interactive whiteboards, bringing a wide range of visual stimuli into lessons and leading to increased pace. Heads of department reported that they have few difficulties obtaining the resources they need to support their pupils' learning.
- 2.60 Teaching includes the regular assessment of pupils' work according to procedures laid out in college policy. Marking is thorough and includes both summative judgments and advice on how to improve. Pupils are praised not only for their overall attainment but also for the effort they make. The college collects data about pupils' ability on entry and again at the beginning of Year 12. This information has been made available to teachers, but its use has not yet been formalised with the result that some departments use it and some do not employ it for targeting purposes. The college places considerable reliance upon small group sizes and good teacher and pupil relationships to ensure that pupils' performance is in line with their abilities. Assessment is used to monitor progress and for setting, but less frequently to plan teaching.

### *Whole School*

- 2.61 The college meets the regulatory requirements for teaching [Standard 1]

### **3. THE QUALITY OF CARE AND RELATIONSHIPS**

#### **The Quality of Pastoral Care, and the Welfare, Health and Safety of Pupils**

- 3.1 The overall quality of pastoral care is outstanding in both the prep school and the college. It is highly successful in fostering a caring atmosphere and in ensuring the welfare, health and safety of its pupils. The college has consolidated the already very high quality of pastoral care at the time of the last inspection and, in particular, has enhanced its success by the appointment of senior staff with exclusively pastoral responsibilities, and two tutors have been allocated to each form group.
- 3.2 Pastoral programmes, which are highly supportive of the girls, fully meet the aim of developing each individual pupil. The welfare of all the girls is seen as a matter of great importance in both parts of the college and, in the senior part, the provision for the girls' welfare health and safety is strongly promoted and has improved since the last inspection. The anti-bullying policy is explicit and is implemented very effectively. Girls throughout the college commented that bullying was very rare, and that if it were to occur it would be dealt with swiftly and robustly.
- 3.3 Child protection issues are fully addressed and an appropriate member of staff in each section of the college is the named person for such matters; they, and the rest of the respective staffs, receive the necessary training. The written child protection policy is thorough and the admissions and attendance registers are well kept and conform fully to statutory obligations.
- 3.4 All necessary fire prevention measures are firmly established and fire drills and fire practices are held regularly, and recorded appropriately, in both parts of the college. Health and Safety issues are fully addressed in the prep school and the college, especially in science laboratories and art and design rooms. Up to half the staff are qualified in first aid, and the whole college is thorough in undertaking risk assessments of potential hazards, ensuring that they are held centrally and having them monitored by the health and safety committee, which meets regularly and is chaired by the bursar. Risk assessments fully cover outside activities and trips. At college level, the conveniently located medical centre is available for pupils who are injured or unwell. Meals in the prep and the college are nutritious and of a good standard although, in the college, the cafeteria facilities are cramped and lunchtime queues can lead to long waiting times.
- 3.5 In appointing staff, the appropriate checks are carried out, including those with the Criminal Records Bureau, and records are kept centrally. The requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act are also adhered to.

#### ***Prep School***

- 3.6 Form tutors have a very clear understanding of the needs of their pupils and the girls insisted that their form teachers were very approachable and could be relied on to address any concerns that they might have. The quality of relationships within the community is excellent. Pupils mix well with their peers and older girls are excellent role models. They made a point of thanking their teachers at the end of lessons. An atmosphere of mutual trust and warmth pervades all aspects of the school's life.
- 3.7 Staff know the girls very well as individuals and share information about them both formally in meetings and informally in day-to-day conversation. All take their pastoral responsibilities very seriously and benefit from a high level of support from senior staff. Pupils are aware of what constitutes acceptable behaviour and are clear about the possible

response if expectations are not met. House points and stickers reward positive behaviour. Limited outdoor play space has led the school to focus on providing appropriate, regular, and routine exercise for every pupil. Parents can receive professional advice about their daughters' health. Girls who are ill are looked after appropriately. All staff have received training in the Every Child Matters agenda. The prep school liaises closely with the bursar and the whole-college committee on health and safety. Advice on healthy eating is included in several areas of the curriculum which has raised pupil awareness of its importance. A recent initiative includes the introduction of fruit at lunch time.

- 3.8 Building regulations and local council restrictions make easy provision of accessibility and disability strategies difficult but the school has carefully considered what can be provided for pupils with particular requirements.

### *College*

- 3.9 The senior mistress oversees college pastoral care, and responsibility for girls in Years 7 to 11 is delegated to her deputy, the school and junior mistress. Each form tutor and assistant typically looks after a group of twenty girls, though tutor group size is somewhat smaller in Years 12 and 13. Regular informal contact, over pastoral issues, occurs between the senior mistress and the school and junior mistress and their teams. Formal pastoral meetings are scheduled weekly.
- 3.10 Tutors deal with day-to-day administrative and pastoral concerns in the short time available at registration in the morning and at the end of the day. Effective use was seen being made of tutor time. All year groups have at least one form period per week. Tutors are also primarily responsible for teaching the PSHCE syllabus which is wide-ranging and is supplemented by input from a number of visiting speakers. Tutors provide feedback to those who coordinate the programme and some PSHCE topics that have generated much interest are then discussed in the college parliament, an elected school council which meets every three weeks, and is a valuable forum for discussing pupil concerns.
- 3.11 Major pastoral issues of an individual or collective nature are referred to the senior mistress and the school and junior mistress, and usually to the principal. The school nurse plays a very valuable part, both formally and informally, in the pastoral structure. Girls spoke warmly throughout the inspection of the care and concern of the principal and her senior staff, and one girl referred to her form tutor as, "my second mother."
- 3.12 The linking of individual senior girls to forms in Years 7 to 9 promotes personal contact across the different parts of the school, as well as offering a valuable leadership opportunity for older girls who thus also perform an important listening role. Younger pupils who were interviewed said that they appreciated this contact with the senior girls.
- 3.13 Disciplinary arrangements are widely accepted by the pupils. The girls understand the rules, and standards of behaviour are good overall. Parental questionnaire comments indicated their appreciation of a strong sense of community, and the family atmosphere of the college. The reward system for good work and community contributions has been upgraded since the last inspection. The increased opportunity to participate in physical activity, which is also part of the desire to promote healthy living, include salsa dancing and the chance for senior girls to take membership of a local gym at a much reduced rate.

***Whole School***

- 3.14 The college meets the regulatory requirements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils [Standard 3].

**The Quality of Links with Parents and the Community**

- 3.15 Outstanding relationships with parents and the community are a real strength of the whole college. It fulfils its aim of strongly promoting awareness of other people's needs and encourages a sense of service. The college has improved on the good links with parents and the community since last inspection, and the prep school has quickly built up highly constructive relationships.
- 3.16 The very large number of replies to the pre-inspection questionnaires in both parts of the college was overwhelmingly positive. Parents showed that they have a very high opinion of the quality of education provided: the teaching, the curriculum, the pastoral care and the value system. They are delighted with the girls' progress and their behaviour. There is strong support for the range of extra-curricular activities available, although a little concern was expressed over the limited out-of-school opportunities for sport and ensemble music in the college. A sixth of parents who responded to the questionnaires also wrote in additional comments clearly indicating that their daughters much enjoy school, and are happy and thriving. The inspectors were fully in agreement with the positive views expressed by the parents in both the prep school and the college.
- 3.17 The whole college handles the concerns of parents sensitively and with due care. The college's complaints procedure is laid out clearly and conforms to requirements. There have been no formal complaints in the college over the last five years, and the very few concerns that have been raised have been dealt with informally.

***Prep School***

- 3.18 Parents have good opportunities to be involved in the activities of the school. They are invited to a wide variety of events ranging from sports fixtures to drama and music concerts. They can help by hearing pupils read in the mornings. The Parents' Circle supports the school by spearheading two annual major charity events, and it acts as a conduit for social contact within the school community. Parents' Circle members also act as a sounding board for the headmistress on general matters, and they meet the headmistress regularly.
- 3.19 Parents are very satisfied with the level of information provided in various policy documents and information booklets, but the website contains only basic information. The pre-inspection questionnaires showed that the parents are very satisfied with the quality of the twice yearly written reports detailing the progress and achievements of their daughters. Regular parents' evenings with the teaching staff are well regarded as are meetings to guide parents on movement from one year group to the next and on secondary transfer choices at the age of 11. Success is celebrated through weekly newsletters, the annual report and on speech day.
- 3.20 Many positive relationships have been built up with community in a relatively short time, and are effective in enriching the pupils' education. There are strong links with the local community, Marylebone village, one activity of which is the choral singing at the switching on of the Christmas lights. The school uses local facilities such as Regent's Park, an ice rink and swimming pools. Productive connections with the local police and fire brigade have been established. Significant charitable giving to local and national charities occurs, including support for a hostel for street children in Sri Lanka. The school and the parents

participate in successful fund raising ventures such as Christmas fairs, art exhibitions and fashion shows.

### *College*

- 3.21 Parents have good opportunities to be involved in activities in the school, and offer assistance with careers events, work experience, the provision of refreshments at some school events, and on an ad hoc basis in other activities such as the Christian society, Cross Examined. The parents' association assists the school by providing funding for small projects such as supporting the initiative of the librarian by funding visiting authors for World Book day. A series of highly valued information evenings has been organised to address pastoral issues, such as drugs and the use of the internet for social networking.
- 3.22 Meetings with staff or the principal can easily be arranged and all staff can be contacted directly by email. The range of published information is good and new parents receive a comprehensive pack of joiner and other information as soon as a girl has accepted a place. Existing parents receive the weekly newsletter, and documents informing them of activities and trips. In Years 9 and 11, useful booklets are forwarded about GCSE and A level options and the school magazine is produced annually.
- 3.23 Each year group has a parents' academic progress consultation evening. In addition, occasions for Years 9 and 11 pupils are arranged in which the next stage of the girls' education is explained, and there is an opportunity to talk to subject teachers about their options. Detailed written reports are good and are sent out twice a year in all years except in Years 11 and 13 in which pupils receive one report annually, and a detailed leaving testimonial is prepared for Year 13 girls as they leave the college. Reports contain a summary of the course content, a series of landmark grades and internal examination marks (where applicable) as well as useful comments on performance and progress, and giving advice for improvement. Predicted grades for external examinations are often implied in the written part of reports, but there is no mechanism for formally reporting this information to the parents.
- 3.24 The school has a number of valuable links with the community. The Magic Partnership involves Year 12 pupils working on a weekly basis with children in a primary school in north London. Within the Duke of Edinburgh's Award girls working towards both Bronze and Silver certification are involved in community service either within the college or in the local community. The college is closely connected to the local church, All Souls', where services are held and concerts performed. Girls also support the Club 60 - talking to elderly members of the congregation and organising tea parties in school. Envision, a London-wide society, which encourages girls to make a difference, arranges school-based projects as well as opportunities to contribute in the wider community. Pupils actively raise money for a variety of good causes, some of which are based locally.

### *Whole School*

- 3.25 The college meets the regulatory requirements for the provision of information and the manner in which the complaints are to be handled [Standards 6 and 7]

## **4. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

### **The Quality of Governance**

- 4.1 Governance is good and has improved since the last inspection; the ethos of the college has been more clearly defined, individual and collective responsibilities of governing council members have been set out, the council's working practices have been codified and it has re-emphasised its commitment to the college's aims. In addition an induction programme has been established for all new governors. Most significantly, a preparatory school has been established and developed most successfully over the last five years.
- 4.2 The structure and management arrangements of governance are now well defined and provide effective oversight and guidance of the school. The college and the preparatory school have a single governing council, but its two parts are administered separately. The council fully contributes to the achievement of the whole college's aims and value system, ensuring that girls benefit from a high quality of educational provision.
- 4.3 Council members are much involved in all-important aspects of financial management and administration, and exercise appropriate financial control. Individual members take their roles of maintaining the ethos and the quality and development of the college very seriously, and are committed to ensuring compliance with regulatory and legal requirements. They carry out well their duty of care and associated responsibilities in areas such as child protection and health and safety.
- 4.4 The finance committee ensures that council contributes appropriately to financial planning, investment in resources and the development of accommodation. Two further committees specialise in governor nominations, and complaints, discipline and appeals functions. The council has skilfully implemented short to medium term college development, but has not operated within a more formal long-term strategic planning framework.
- 4.5 The chairman is in regular and close touch with the principal of the college and the headmistress of the preparatory school. The latter is also closely supported by the immediate past chairman. Both heads attend council meetings, as does the senior tutor. The chairman has a thorough knowledge of the whole college. The council is routinely provided with very good quality information by the two headmistresses. Governors set a high attendance record at various council meetings, and several council members regularly attend college and preparatory school occasions such as concerts, and plays. Good relationships between the council and staff of the whole college are fostered. Periodically, council members have informal contact with staff before council meetings. Social events are held to which council members and staff are invited. The governing council is very proud of Queen's College and its achievements, it has extensive knowledge of what is going on, and it provides encouraging and thoughtfully critical support for the whole college.

### **The Quality of Leadership and Management**

- 4.6 The quality of leadership and management is good overall, as is evident from particularly strong pupils' personal development, excellent provision of pastoral care, high academic standards achieved and improved quality of teaching. The quality of leadership and management has been enhanced since the last inspection in the college, and has been evident in the rapid development of the prep school since its launch in 2002. However, strategic planning and appraisal have not been taken up sufficiently in the college, as recommended in the previous inspection. Management is aware of these shortcomings and they are being

addressed. Financial planning, under the skilled leadership of the bursar, is good, and is directed to meet whole college priorities.

- 4.7 The prep school and the college each have a generous complement of well-qualified and experienced staff. Newly qualified teachers are well supported in accordance with national guidelines, and a good induction scheme is in operation.
- 4.8 Administration is very efficient and is carried out with great courtesy. Technical guidance and support are provided to good effect. All members of the support staff play an immensely valuable part in the life of the college, and are very much valued and appreciated by senior management, the teaching staff, pupils and parents. They are extremely loyal, work very well in teams and provide an effective all-round service. Communications are good at every level and help to ensure that the whole college functions smoothly and effectively at all times.

### ***Prep School***

- 4.9 Although the principal of the college has statutory responsibility for the whole college, she has appropriately delegated powers to the headmistress of the prep school. The two head teachers work closely together in the interest of the whole college. The headmistress displays strong leadership qualities and has enormous energy.
- 4.10 Steps have been taken to strengthen leadership structures at all levels of management since the prep school opened. The senior management team (SMT) has tried hard to improve curricular and extra-curricular provision over five years of rapid growth, which has also included the introduction of pupils in the Foundation Stage.
- 4.11 The SMT is beginning to implement a planned list of educational objectives. This document is intended to help senior managers to set and carry through priorities and effect improvements. Individual SMT members do not have particular areas of responsibility within these planning arrangements but, since the school opened, the role of subject coordinators has been revised to the benefit of teaching and learning. Increased subject specialism has raised teaching standards in some disciplines, and has helped to bring about closer curricular links with the college. The director of studies is beginning to establish staff development and to introduce greater evaluation and review of procedures. However, there is no whole-school marking policy, nor any means by which the curriculum and standards of teaching and learning can be systematically monitored.
- 4.12 Subject handbooks are thorough and consistent with whole-school policies. Subject coordinators contribute to the management of resources, and in subjects such as history, English, science and ICT, staff are beginning to pass on best practice ideas. In-service training courses, some of which are whole-school activities, are linked to identified school needs.
- 4.13 The creation of more specialist teaching rooms and the availability of much increased teaching space have resulted from the leasing of directly adjacent property. The basement houses the Foundation Stage, and a refurbished computer suite and two libraries have been created. The Georgian interiors of the school have been sympathetically converted and the high quality of decoration and furnishings has provided an excellent backdrop for interesting displays of pupil work. Thoughtful arrangements, to compensate for the lack of outside space, ensure that many of the recreational needs of the pupils are met.

***College***

- 4.14 Since the last inspection the principal has contributed greatly to the development of the whole college. Capital development programmes have been promoted, a more effective senior management team has been established, and pupil recruitment has been boosted in a highly competitive market. The principal knows her pupils and staff very well, and much effort is expended in meeting their needs. A clear vision for strengthening the college's position is apparent and great energy and leadership skill are deployed to ensure that the college's aims are met. A short-term development plan was drawn up after the last inspection centred on the curriculum, teaching and learning, extra-curricular provision, marketing and accommodation. Currently, planning does not cover every aspect of the college's operation, and while heads of departments draw up and submit plans for the development of their subjects to the governors, they are not able to fit them into a set of whole college priorities.
- 4.15 Senior managers promote the aims of the college on a broad front and they, together with heads of department, work very hard to carry out their respective responsibilities. The senior tutor is managing and developing in-service training, and is initiating a school appraisal system. Senior pastoral staff and their specialist teams are successfully devolving some responsibilities to a committed group of form tutors and assistant tutors. Some heads of department effectively monitor teaching and learning within their disciplines, but no clear system exists to ensure that quality control is uniform across the subject range.
- 4.16 Resources for learning, including the provision for ICT, are abundant, competently managed and well suited to pupil needs. The library provision is particularly strong, and contributes effectively to independent study and pupil learning. The rebuilding of the Pfeiffer Hall has significantly enriched opportunities for whole school gatherings and the hall has now become an excellent venue for a range of creative activities
- 4.17 College documentation is outstanding and procedures are in place carefully to review and develop well drawn up college policies and procedures. The staff handbook is comprehensive and very clear, and provides detailed information across a wide range of whole college issues.

***Whole School***

- 4.18 The college meets the regulatory requirements for the suitability of proprietors and staff and for premises and accommodation [Standards 4 and 5].
- 4.19 The school participates in the national scheme for the induction of newly qualified teachers and meets its requirements.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

### Overall Conclusions

- 5.1 The establishment of the preparatory school has been a major achievement for the whole family of Queen's College. Both parts of the college are successful in fulfilling the college's aims and objectives. The special personal qualities of the girls, including a determination of all to do better than expected, in an essentially non-competitive environment, are clearly evident, and the expression of the girls' appreciation and enjoyment of school is typified by the comment: "Queen's is like a second home." Educational standards are high, spiritual, moral, social and cultural objectives are realised and the quality of the teaching, some of which is excellent, enables pupils to make significant progress. Pastoral needs are outstandingly well met and parental and community links are a real strength of the college. Resolute leadership and caring management throughout the college, together with good governance, make a decisive input into ensuring high overall levels of achievement.

### *Prep School*

- 5.2 The good leadership and highly committed staff have achieved a great deal in a short time. The behaviour of the pupils, their approach to learning, and their relationships with staff, and with each other, are exemplary. Strong pastoral care and high quality spiritual, moral social and cultural guidance ensure that girls are well-rounded individuals. They are courteous, caring, and hard working, while retaining a sense of fun.
- 5.3 Currently there are too few opportunities for staff with management roles to monitor the curriculum and the standards and quality of teaching. The role of the SENCO and the LDD programme are not fully developed, there is no whole school marking policy, and assessment is not used consistently to plan the next stage of pupil learning. The school is aware of all these issues.

### *College*

- 5.4 The strong academic and other successes of the girls provide clear indications of the college's progress. They are independent, mature and well-balanced young people, who are self-confident and unafraid to express their own views. Senior girls are highly appreciative of the opportunities and responsibilities made available to them, and are themselves a very good advertisement for the college.
- 5.5 The college has improved significantly since the last inspection - in the refurbishment and extension of the Pfeiffer Hall, in adaptations to the curriculum, in developing library and study provision, and in enhancing the availability of ICT, especially in modern languages. Teaching, pastoral care and personal development programmes have improved further. A few earlier areas for development continue to be relevant, in spite of the progress made. These include staff appraisal, long term development planning, systematised pupil monitoring, additional challenge for the most able pupils in the classroom, refinement of learning support, and greater exploitation of ICT resources to enhance learning. The school is aware of all these issues.

### *Whole School*

- 5.6 The college meets all the regulatory requirements.

## **Next Steps**

- 5.7 The college has no major weaknesses but, in order to become even better, it should implement the following recommendations for improvement.

### ***Whole School***

1. Draw up a whole college development plan, clearly identifying the main priorities, making appropriate links between the preparatory school and the college, and incorporating annual action plans.

### ***Prep School***

2. Review the structure of the senior management team and ensure that senior managers are assigned specific individual responsibilities for key areas of strategic development.
3. Within the development planning process:
  - establish an appraisal system linked to the existing staff professional development programme;
  - review the LDD provision and develop the role of the SENCO;
  - implement a whole-school marking policy;
  - continue to develop the use of the library and ICT in all areas of the curriculum to promote research opportunities and independent learning;

### ***College***

4. Consolidate the current strategies for monitoring pupils' progress by ensuring that all subject teachers and tutors use on a more regular basis the available information about their pupils' abilities and prior attainments.
  5. Ensure full implementation of an appraisal system, closely linked to the fulfilment of the school development plan and staff professional needs.
- 5.8 No action is required in respect of regulatory requirements.

## 6. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 6.1 The inspection was carried out from 25<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2008. The inspectors examined samples of pupils' work, observed lessons and conducted formal interviews with pupils. They held discussions with teaching and non-teaching staff, parents and governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the medical centre. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined a range of documentation made available by the school.

### List of Inspectors

Mr Neil Gamble	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Jill Lance	Assistant Reporting Inspector
Miss Judy Bate	Deputy Head, COBIS school
Mrs Angela Culley	Headmistress, ISA school
Mrs Roberta Georghiou	Headmistress, GSA school
Mr Andrew Johnson	Headmaster, HMC school
Dr David Livingstone	Headmaster, IAPS school
Mrs Janet Mitchell	Deputy Head, GSA school
Mr Michael Oliver	Assistant Head , HMC School
Mr Roderick Spencer	Head of Department, SHMIS school