



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

MOUNT ST MARY'S COLLEGE

INTERIM INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Mount St Mary's College

The preparatory school was inspected at the same time and a separate report published.

Full Name of College	Mount St Mary's College		
DfE Number	830/6014		
Registered Charity Number	230165		
Address	Mount St Mary's College College Road Spinkhill Derbyshire S21 3YL		
Telephone Number	01246 433388		
Fax Number	01246 435511		
Email Address	info@msmcollege.com		
Head	Mr Laurence McKell		
Chair of Governors	Mr Jim Kelly		
Age Range	11 to 19		
Total Number of Pupils	428		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (257 boys; 171 girls;)		
Numbers by Age	11-18:	428	
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	341	Capacity for flexi-boarding:
Number of Boarders	Total:	65	
	Full:	65	Weekly:
Inspection dates	16 Nov 2010 to 17 Nov 2010		

PREFACE

This report is according to the *Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) schedule for INTERIM inspections*. The inspection is a two-day visit with a focus on compliance with regulatory requirements. ISI inspections occur every three years and have two formats, interim and standard, which usually occur in an alternating pattern. The school's next inspection will therefore follow the standard schedule, which includes two visits totalling five days and places greater emphasis on the quality of education and care in addition to reporting on regulatory compliance. The school's previous inspection was in October 2006

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Government for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010*. The range of these Regulations is as follows.

- (a) Quality of education provided (curriculum)
- (b) Quality of education provided (teaching)
- (c) Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
- (d) Welfare, health and safety of pupils
- (e) Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors
- (f) Premises and accommodation
- (g) Provision of information
- (h) Manner in which complaints are to be handled

*These Regulations replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003.

Legislation additional to Part 3, Welfare, health and safety of pupils, 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.

A specific inspection of boarding was not carried out and the report does not contain judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. Any comments on boarding arising from this inspection are in the context of the school as a whole. The existing report on boarding was produced in November 2008 by the Children's Directorate of the Office for Standards in Education Ofsted and can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk under Children's social care/Boarding school.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Founded in 1842, Mount St Mary's College provides a Catholic education for boys and girls aged eleven to eighteen; it caters for day and boarding pupils.
- 1.2 The school is governed by a trust which governs the school through local governors. Their aims for the school are based on the principles of Ignatius Loyola and the Society of Jesus that he founded. These enshrine discernment of each person's unique abilities and their development and commitment to the service of society and thereby to the greater glory of God: to become 'men and women for others'.
- 1.3 The college has 428 pupils of which 257 are boys and 171 are girls. Ninety-eight pupils are in the sixth form. About 20 per cent of pupils board. Most pupils come from English families of professional or business backgrounds, but the number of overseas pupils increases in Years 9, 10 and 12.
- 1.4 The ability profile of the school to GCSE is slightly above the national average, though the spread is wide. The ability profile of the sixth form is slightly below the national average, again with a wide spread of ability. Sixty pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and all receive support with their English, and the school has identified 35 pupils as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- 1.5 Almost all pupils transfer from the prep school, Barlborough Hall, into senior school, where they are joined by new pupils from local prep and primary schools. About 60 per cent the Year 11 pupils stay on into the sixth form and at 18+ most gain a place at the university of their choice.
- 1.6 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.

Senior School.

School	NC name
Upper Elements	Year 7
Figures	Year 8
Rudiments	Year 9
Grammar	Year 10
Syntax	Year 11
Poetry	Year 12
Rhetoric	Year 13

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and basic skills

- 2.1 Pupils achieve well, meeting the school's aims to help them develop intellectually, artistically, and physically. They write effectively, using a good range of vocabulary, description and imagination to good effect. The presentation of work is good. Pupils are articulate and use information and communication technology (ICT) effectively for research. In mathematics and science they tackle problems logically and reach sound conclusions. In the humanities and the arts they display good, and on occasions, outstanding ability to argue a case or explore ideas. In extra-curricular activities pupils have achieved excellent success at national and county level in rugby and hockey, in London Academy for Music and Drama examinations, in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and in the national maths challenge. Older pupils in particular progress extremely well in their understanding of economic wellbeing through success in competitions in Young Enterprise.
- 2.2 Pupils' performance at GCSE has been good in relation to the national average for all maintained secondary schools. At A level attainment has been similar to the national average. Results in both GCSE and A-level, as well as the quality of pupils' work in class and in their written work, indicate the good progress that pupils are making. They apply themselves purposefully, work effectively individually or in groups, and take a keen interest in their studies. These are important factors that contribute to the good standards they reach.
- 2.3 The curricular provision and the extra-curricular experiences that pupils enjoy successfully fulfil the school's aim to develop the whole person, while, through the flexibility within the curriculum, recognising each pupil as "being unique in the eyes of God". The curriculum is broad and balanced. It provides a range of modern foreign languages and an enhanced studies course that is providing a coherent approach to personal and social education, elements of religious studies, ICT and learning skills. The range of extra-curricular activities, which includes experience in the Combined Cadet Force and intellectual and cultural enrichment through the Bellarmine Society, is outstanding.
- 2.4 The success in academic work is related to the good quality of the teaching. Teaching is well planned and knowledgeable. It provides good variety through the resources and methods used. Good attention is generally given to the needs of pupils of different abilities. The support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those for whom English is an additional language is outstanding. The quality of marking and target setting is variable.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 2.5 Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They are aware from all that is within the school that there is a life beyond the secular. Through the opportunities for prayer, the various liturgies and the well-displayed trip to Lourdes they grow in understanding so that by the sixth form they confidently discuss aspects of the after-life. They become personable individuals, growing in self-confidence and self-esteem, but always with humility. Pupils have an excellent approach to moral issues. They recognise the value of following rules and behave in an exemplary

manner in class and mostly about the school. They recognise the importance of charities and their own moral responsibility to help those in need.

- 2.6 Pupils' social development is excellent. Their mature approach in discussions in the school council, the chaplaincy and in the house meetings is impressive. Sixth formers make excellent prefects and carry out their responsibilities diligently. Culturally, many benefit from the school's wide range of activities, visits and peer relationships, beneficial to pupils from both the United Kingdom and from abroad. Religious education and other subjects such as history, art and music, along with the ethnic mix of the school, raise pupils' awareness of different world cultures and beliefs.
- 2.7 Pupils benefit greatly from the school's excellent pastoral care. Pupils express great confidence in the support they receive from their teachers through their responses to questionnaires and in conversations with inspectors. They feel happy and secure. The school has well-written anti-bullying and child protection policies and the staff have regular training in areas of care. These contribute to the excellent relationships that exist in the school.
- 2.8 The provision for boarders is good. Boarders express satisfaction with, and enthusiasm for, the conditions under which they live. They have excellent relationships with the boarding staff and each other and feel safe and secure. They enjoy the range of activities organised for them.
- 2.9 The school's policy for supporting those with disabilities is in order. It also has well-structured policies covering fire precautions and health and safety; the provision for taking care of the sick is good. The keeping of the admission register is in line with requirements as is the excellent system of daily registration of pupil attendance.

The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management

- 2.10 The school is well governed, led and managed. Governors are highly committed to the aims of the school and ensure that it is well resourced and staffed. The various committees and those with key responsibilities carry out their assignments well. They have an excellent strategic development plan. Governors and senior management have a clear vision for the school, underpinned by the aims of the founding fathers.
- 2.11 The senior management team are successfully improving policies and procedures designed to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Heads of department also play a role in this but generally their monitoring of lessons and pupils' written work is too limited. The school has an excellent development plan. Staff induction is thorough and in-service training is carefully organised. The school has a well-structured performance management system and a performance related pay scheme. The centralised register is well maintained.
- 2.12 The school's excellent accommodation includes first rate social areas for pupils and excellent facilities for sport.
- 2.13 The school has good links with its parents through its reporting system, regular communications and its website. Parents contribute to pupils' learning in a variety of ways and there is an active parents' association. Parents expressed very positive support for the school and what it is doing for their children in the pre-inspection questionnaire. The school has good links with community.

3. ACTION POINTS

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

- 3.1 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 3.2 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Ensure that good quality assessment and marking strategies are followed consistently by all staff.
 2. Provide time and appropriate in-service training to enable heads of department to properly evaluate the performance of their departments.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed a small sample of 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 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

Mr Terence Dillon

Dr Ernst Zillekens

Reporting Inspector

Head of Department HMC School