



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

MORE HOUSE SCHOOL

STANDARD INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

More House School

Full Name of School	More House School
DfE Number	207/6202
Registered Charity Number	3127373
Address	More House School 22-24 Pont Street Chelsea London SW1X 0AA
Telephone Number	020 7235 2855
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Email Address	office@morehouse.org.uk
Headmaster	Mr Robert Carlisle
Chair of Governors	Mr John Davidson
Age Range	11 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	187
Gender of Pupils	Girls
Numbers by Age	11-18: 187
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 187
Inspection dates	29 Mar 2011 to 30 Mar 2011 04 May 2011 to 06 May 2011

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the STANDARD *ISI schedule*. The inspection 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 November 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 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 Standards 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.

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 More House School is a selective day school in central London for girls from the age of eleven to eighteen. It was founded by the Canonesses of St Augustine in 1953 at the request of a group of parents determined to send their daughters to a Catholic London day school. It is named after St Thomas More, the Tudor scholar and theologian. The school expanded steadily and moved to its current premises in Knightsbridge in 1971. At that time, the school passed into lay management and leadership, and is currently administered as a lay charitable trust by a governing body, to which parents still make an important contribution. The school welcomes girls of all faiths or none. The current headmaster was appointed in January 2007.
- 1.2 At the time of the inspection, 187 pupils were on roll, of whom 56 were in Years 12 and 13. Twenty-seven pupils come from families where English is an additional language (EAL), and ten of these receive support for the acquisition of English. Fifty-seven pupils have been identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD), of whom forty-six receive specialist learning support from the school. Six pupils have statements of special educational needs (SEN). Most pupils come from professional and business families who live within ten miles of the school, and the cultural mix of girls represents the multi-cultural society of the area, with approximately one in five coming from an ethnic minority background. From the results of nationally standardised tests, the ability profile of Years 7 to 11 is above the national average. The ability profile of Years 12 and 13 is in line with the national average.
- 1.3 The school aims to provide an environment where pupils are valued and supported as individuals and where their rights and dignity are maintained. It strives to foster an ethos of spiritual growth, not only for those within the Roman Catholic Church but also for those who adhere to other Christian traditions and other faiths. It seeks to develop the spiritual, academic and cultural potential of each pupil to the full at every stage of her school career in such a way that this development will continue throughout her life. It aims to encourage intellectual curiosity and pride in achievement and expects all the members of the school community to act with integrity, to display a concern for justice and to be sensitive to the needs of other people.
- 1.4 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school for the sixth form and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following table.

School	NC name
Lower Sixth	Year 12
Upper Sixth	Year 13

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 More House School successfully fulfils most of its aims. The quality of the pupils' achievements is good and their progress is supported by the excellent curriculum, the wide range of extra-curricular activities and effective teaching. The girls develop strong literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, and their creativity in art, dance, drama and music is outstanding, but their independent thinking skills and their intellectual curiosity are less well developed. The provision for those who have EAL, LDD or SEN is effective and staff support, within the classroom and in specialist lessons, enables those girls to make good progress in relation to their ability. Whilst teaching is good overall and staff have strong subject knowledge often presented with enthusiasm, on occasion over-directed teaching and insufficiently demanding expectations result in a lack of challenge for the more able girls. Assessment procedures are variable and marking is inconsistent. The overall level of good achievement is also caused by pupils' positive attitudes to learning, their exemplary behaviour and their outstanding relationships with each other and staff.
- 2.2 The personal development of pupils is excellent. They reflect exceptionally well on spiritual matters concerning the non-material aspects of life, and demonstrate their concern for justice and their sensitivity to the needs of others through their service within the school community and their generous charitable giving. Their social development is extremely strong and they collaborate very well. The sixth-form mentoring system for girls who join the school in Year 7 works particularly well and they appreciate the continuation of this through the vertical house structure. An excellent level of pastoral care and guidance supports the girls' personal development. The arrangements for pupils' welfare, health and safety are good, with day-to-day procedures for safeguarding being robust.
- 2.3 Effective governance sets the ethos of the school and oversees its educational development, having been particularly successful in moving forward on the recommendations of the previous inspection concerning the accommodation. Leadership within the school is strong, with the headmaster and senior leaders giving clarity of vision through the school development plan which is focused well on the current issues for improvement. Management processes are less rigorously carried out, particularly in the areas of monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and in the lack of a formal appraisal procedure, so these previous recommendations have not been fully completed. High-quality staff are deployed well, their induction is thorough and in-service training is valued. The recruitment of staff is currently undertaken carefully, although the contracts with supply agencies were not sufficiently detailed in the past. Links with parents are good and, in their pre-inspection questionnaire, they expressed satisfaction with all aspects of the school, being particularly positive about the curriculum, the school's promotion of worthwhile attitudes and values, and the availability of information. No areas of concern were raised by a significant number of parents. Inspectors agree in general with parents' positive views. However, reports to parents do not contain sufficient subject-specific information about progress or targets for improvement. Very few pupils responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire but, in discussion, they are happy at the school and feel valued and supported as individuals, in line with the school's aims.

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 did not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010, and therefore it was required to:

- ensure that, in the future, the contract set up between the school and any employment business supplying staff requires that business to provide a notification that all recruitment checks have been undertaken on the staff supplied, and that this notification is received before the member of staff begins work at the school [Part 4, paragraphs 20(2)(a) and (d), under Suitability of staff and proprietors; and, for the same reason, Part 3, paragraphs 7(a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety].

2.5 All correct procedures are now being followed.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.6 In addition to the above regulatory action point, the school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Undertake the monitoring of teaching and learning more rigorously and regularly in all subjects, and devise a robust framework for appraising staff.
2. Widen teaching strategies and ensure staff have high expectations so that more able pupils are always challenged.
3. Develop assessment procedures to reduce the variability in monitoring the individual progress of pupils and the inconsistency in marking.
4. Ensure reports to parents are subject-specific, contain suitable information about the progress pupils have made and include targets for improvement.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievements is good overall and broadly fulfils the aims of the school of encouraging every girl to fulfil her academic potential at each stage of her school career. Pupils develop their knowledge, understanding and skills effectively in their academic work and also in extra-curricular activities. The girls are extremely articulate and confident, expressing themselves well both orally and in their written work across many subjects. They listen carefully to the explanations of their teachers and their peers. Their numeracy skills are developed well in subjects such as science and geography as well as in mathematics, and ICT skills are also of a good standard. Many girls demonstrate particular strengths in the creative and performing arts, as seen in the high-quality displays of art work around the school and in the strong levels of music, drama and dance. Evidence was seen of girls being given opportunities to think for themselves and to solve problems within lessons, a recommendation from the previous inspection. However, on occasion some girls with LDD, SEN and EAL found this difficult to do on their own and needed varying amounts of support from their teachers to complete investigative work. At other times, more able girls were not always sufficiently challenged in their thinking. Thus pupils' intellectual curiosity is not yet fully awakened as intended in the school's aims.
- 3.2 Pupils' successes beyond the classroom cover textiles, art, mathematics, instrumental music and jazz dance examinations, and more able pupils develop their talents in various London music institutions. The musicians are also involved in tours in major western cities in Europe, singing in many churches and cathedrals. Pupils also succeed in sport, being the local 'hockey team of the year'. Most of the Year 10 pupils develop their leadership skills successfully in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Almost all sixth-formers apply for university and over half of them are awarded a place at their first-choice institution. All of these achievements make a significant contribution to their personal development, particularly in strengthening team work and respect for each other's abilities.
- 3.3 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2008 to 2010. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in GCSE have been good in relation to the national average for maintained schools. In 2010, almost all girls achieved five or more GCSE grades A* to C, including mathematics and English, and 43 per cent of the grades awarded were at A* and A. The results in International GCSE (IGCSE) mathematics in 2009 and 2010 have been below the international and UK norms; however, the school entered these examinations for a trial period, and its participation is due to be reviewed. In 2008 and 2009, A-level results were good in relation to the national average for girls in maintained schools and similar to the average for girls in maintained selective schools. In 2010 results were similar to the national average for girls in maintained schools. This level of attainment indicates that overall pupils make good progress relative to the average for pupils of similar ability, as shown by standardised measures of progress from Years 7 to 11. Good progress was also seen in lesson observations, in pupils' written work and in curriculum interviews with them. Pupils with SEN, LDD and EAL also achieve to the best of their ability in examinations and make good progress in lessons, many of which are within small classes, because of the targeted support they each receive and through the effective individual sessions

they have with specialist learning support teachers. The achievement of more able pupils is good when teachers have high expectations and these pupils are offered appropriate challenge in lessons; for example in a geography lesson, open questioning and higher level interactions encouraged more able pupils to express and develop well their own ideas about tourism in the UK and in newly developing countries.

- 3.4 The good quality of teaching makes an effective contribution to the pupils' learning and achievement, as do their positive attitudes to learning, their exemplary behaviour and the excellent relationships they enjoy between themselves and with staff. They co-operate extremely well with each other and also work effectively on their own. They generally approach their lessons with enjoyment and the presentation and organisation of their work is good, demonstrating the concentration and effort they put into it.

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

- 3.5 The quality of the curriculum is excellent and a strength of the school, successfully developing the spiritual, academic and cultural potential of each pupil to the full at every stage of her school career, thus fulfilling the school's aims. It gives extensive coverage across the requisite areas of learning in the compulsory years of education and good subject choice for GCSE and A level. Considerable changes have been implemented in recent years to ensure that the curriculum engages pupils, both with the subject knowledge and with the wider world in which they live. Care has been taken to ensure that effective programmes of study have been developed to support departmental work and the improvement of teaching therein, taking account of learning styles, for example, and promoting cross-curricular activity.

- 3.6 The curriculum is suitable for all ages, abilities and needs and supports the excellent personal development of the girls as elements of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are carefully threaded throughout, encouraging respect, an understanding of rights and responsibilities and personal dignity. The performing and expressive arts are very well represented with art, drama, music, dance and textiles, and the visible outcomes provide rich displays throughout the school, celebrating the contribution of all. Pupils are happy with the subject options available for them, and the resources within the library and ICT are well used to support their studies, representing improvements since the previous inspection. Girls follow the three separate sciences in lessons, though they are examined through dual award science at GCSE. Older pupils say that they do not have sufficient time allocated to sport in Years 10 to 13, and inspectors agree with their views.

- 3.7 Provision for LDD, SEN and EAL is effective throughout the school and successfully integrated in both subject planning and a pupil's daily life. All staff are aware of the pupils' needs and, through support within lessons and extra individual learning with a specialist teacher, these pupils make good progress for their abilities across the curriculum. There are a number of opportunities for the more able to be challenged, through acceleration in subjects such as mathematics and religious studies or enrichment through the extended project qualification, although these pupils are not always sufficiently challenged within some of their normal lessons.

- 3.8 The wide range of extra-curricular activities available both at lunch time and after school offer new opportunities and experiences, including many musical ensembles

and clubs such as board games, chess and film club. Enrichment opportunities are excellent, and include trips to places of interest in and around London, and residential visits such as the sports tour to Dublin and international music tours. Careers advice is well developed, assisting in Year 9 with the selection of subjects for GCSE and in Year 12 with the identification of suitable opportunities for work experience allied to potential university course choices and future employment. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme is comprehensive and reflects very well the ethos and aims of the school.

- 3.9 Links with the community are strongly promoted, and a few pupils attend the Royal Institution master classes in mathematics or participate in activities within music institutions in London. Other opportunities include cross-curricular engagement in ecological conferences as well as a vast range of support for charitable works and a strong involvement by most of Year 10 in community service through engagement with the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.10 The quality of teaching is good overall, making an effective contribution to the pupils' progress and achievement, and is in line with the aims of the school to provide an environment where pupils are valued and supported as individuals, and where they are encouraged to take pride in their own achievements. Effective teaching enables most pupils, including those with SEN, LDD and EAL, to make good progress and give of their best. The teachers' subject knowledge is strong, they generally make effective use of a good range of resources and lessons are conducted at a brisk pace, encouraging pupils to remain focused and on task. Planning of lessons is often effective, covering a range of activities and sometimes endeavouring to develop pupils' skills of enquiry and curiosity, a recommendation at the time of the previous inspection. This was seen in a religious studies (RS) lesson where pupils used their powers of reasoning to evaluate answers to topics such as the existence of God and discovered that their marking levels were more demanding than those of the examiners.
- 3.11 In the best lessons, lively and enthusiastic teaching includes effective questioning techniques, giving staff good opportunities to assess pupils' progress during the lesson and enables all pupils, including those with learning needs, to achieve well and make good progress, because on most occasions the support given is well matched to the pupils' abilities. Expectations are high in these lessons, and praise and encouragement are used to good effect, which adds to pupils' enjoyment of, and engagement with, the topics studied. For example, in a drama lesson, pupils were fully engaged in effectively exploring a range of non-naturalistic techniques, inspired by the encouragement and high expectations of their teacher. In the less successful lessons, teachers over-directed the activities and pupils were not given as much opportunity to think for themselves, contribute ideas or interact with others, which also meant that, on these few occasions, they were not routinely assessed for their understanding. Sometimes, insufficiently demanding expectations meant that the lesson was aimed at the middle of the ability range and, whilst those pupils with LDD, SEN or EAL were supported as necessary by the teacher, the lack of challenge for more able pupils led to their less rapid progress. However, senior managers have recognised that currently not enough is done to challenge more able pupils within the classroom.
- 3.12 Marking is often good and gives useful comments to pupils about what they need to do to improve. However, not all staff are consistent in following the school's marking

policy and some marking is cursory. Pupils are involved in their own target-setting and say that they find this helpful in encouraging them to take some responsibility for their own learning. Assessment overall is sound, although not yet fully embedded into the school's practice. Whilst data from examination results are available, variability exists between subjects in the systems used to monitor the individual progress of each pupil as she moves through the school.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The pupils' personal development is excellent and is a major strength of the school. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is assured by the outstanding pastoral support given by the staff, and by the exceptional relationships that develop over time between staff and pupils and between the pupils themselves. The school is highly successful in meeting its aims to provide an environment in which pupils are respected, valued and supported as individuals. It is successful too in fostering elements of spiritual growth, irrespective of tradition or faith. Pupils participate well in worship based on the Catholic ethos of the school, valuing the contribution the chaplain makes to their life and to the school as a whole. Their understanding of religious and spiritual issues is exceptionally well developed, and girls respond with enthusiasm to the RS course and to the close focus in assembly on praise and reflection. They show an excellent sensitivity to the needs of others, taking every opportunity to show care for those less fortunate than themselves. They are extremely confident and demonstrate high levels of self-esteem because of the praise, encouragement and support given by the staff.
- 4.2 The pupils' awareness of right and wrong is very clear, and their outstanding behaviour as witnessed in lessons and around the school does them great credit. They are confident in expressing their opinions, they show a keen awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses, and new girls entering the school are assimilated with genuine interest and care. The school plays its part in recognising and rewarding the pupils' successes, yet has appropriate sanctions in place if required. The PHSE programme is very well developed and assures pupils that they will receive good direction in growing up safely. They are adept at debating ethical issues and demonstrate a strong sense of justice within, and responsibility for, the world around them, in fulfilment of the school's aims.
- 4.3 The social development of the girls is exceptional. Pupils work extremely well together, and show great respect and concern for each other. Girls are eager to take responsibility through the various offices of prefects and house leaders, and many respond to the opportunities to initiate and develop fund-raising. They participate with enthusiasm as class representatives in the school forum, though the very strong relationships that are developed with their teachers and non-teaching staff means that ideas and suggestions can be raised at any time, and they know they will receive a measured response. They take responsibility as excellent citizens in many areas within the school community, from the easy communication of who needs to be where and what needs to be done by operating the school's public address system, to the mixing of age groups in the dining room at lunch.
- 4.4 Cultural awareness is good. Pupils like the cultural diversity of the school; they feel valued, whatever their background, and believe that issues of culture and language do not divide them. In this multi-cultural, inclusive community, they live in tolerance and harmony with each other extremely well. Whilst other world faiths are not studied in detail, girls share elements of their own culture with each other, for example, through dancing, or by studying artists and media personalities of other countries. They develop a strong knowledge of Western culture through visits to museums, art galleries and places of interest within easy reach of the school. Their awareness of public institutions and services in England is very well promoted, with participation in the referendum on the alternative voting system taking place during the inspection.

- 4.5 The school promotes a very clear ethos that builds confidence and self-esteem in the pupils; parents have chosen More House for the clear values it promotes and for the family atmosphere it engenders, which ensures the successful development of its girls into adulthood.

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

- 4.6 The quality of the arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils are overall good, successfully fulfilling the aims of the school. The pastoral care shown to pupils is excellent and makes an important and strong contribution to their personal development. Form teachers, assisted by a senior teacher for their phase in the school, give helpful guidance as required to the girls. Pupils say that they are very well cared for, and that they have an adult to turn to should they have a problem. Sixth-form mentors, trained by an external Catholic pastoral support company, show an excellent awareness of the needs of younger pupils as they join the school, and this arrangement works very well. Strong systems of both formal and informal communication between staff ensure that pupils causing concern are supported as quickly as possible. The school counsellor is in school each week helping with the PSHE programme and being available to girls who may wish to see her. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive. Excellent relationships between the pupils themselves are further strengthened by the vertical house system where sixth-form mentors and their younger mentees are in the same house. Very few pupils responded to the pupils' pre-inspection questionnaire but, in formal and informal discussions, pupils feel extremely well supported by all staff and are confident that they have their best interests at heart.
- 4.7 Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and the pupils respond extremely well, particularly within the confines of a building with little outdoor space. An effective policy promotes good behaviour and indicates the sanctions which will be applied for any unacceptable behaviour, taking into account any related difficulty or disability. Pupils say that bullying is rare and believe that staff would deal with any difficulties quickly and constructively. Inspection judgements confirm the positive views of the girls. The safeguarding of pupils is good; all staff are trained as appropriate to their responsibilities and the policy is strong, although its implementation concerning written contracts for agency staff in the past has not been rigorous. Welfare, health and safety procedures are therefore good.
- 4.8 Measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire, with an immediate response, through implementation of improvements, to any issues arising in regular fire drills. Good risk assessments are undertaken covering all areas of school life, including educational visits. Arrangements for those pupils who fall ill during the school day are suitable. An accessibility plan has been written which is designed to improve the educational provision for those pupils with disabilities. Pupils understand very well the importance of participating in physical exercise and choosing a healthy diet; the school provides nutritious meals which are excellent and offer plenty of choice. The admission and attendance registers have been accurately maintained and kept.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good overall, and fully supports the aims of the school. The governors are small in number and do not use any committee structure, preferring to put any groups together on an ad hoc basis as appropriate to their needs, so they all have good and regular oversight of the school. The chair and vice-chair are in close contact with the headmaster, bursar and clerk to the governors, and ensure the governors approach their responsibilities with care, by encouraging the board to undertake training and to be more involved in the life and work of the school, a process which is gradually being implemented. Governors are known relatively well by the staff as they have an annual dinner to which staff are invited on a rotational basis and governors attend school functions.
- 5.2 The board receives helpful reports from the head and the bursar which informs it of school life, its challenges and its achievements, and governors are all expected to contribute comments on these reports with a view to evaluating the school's successes and enabling improvement and growth. Whilst they hold the current senior management to account for their delegated responsibilities for regulatory issues through a rolling programme of review, they had not recognised the problem in the past with contracts for supply staff services. The achievement and care of the pupils is of high importance and governors are involved in discussions on safeguarding issues, welfare, health and safety regularly. Financial control is strong, as evidenced in the refurbishment of part of the building since the previous inspection, and they work hard to provide a good quality and quantity of material and human resources.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.3 The quality of leadership and management is good overall, enabling the aims of the school to be largely fulfilled and reflecting the good quality of the pupils' education and their outstanding personal development. Staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are strongly committed to their roles, and work together well as a team. A fairly large senior leadership team has been appointed, which supports the work of the central group consisting of the headmaster, deputy head and the bursar. The whole senior team demonstrates effective leadership, both in academic and welfare areas. The headmaster and his deputy have a strong vision for the future of the school, and this has been committed to paper in a formal school development plan, which is focused well on the current areas for improvement as identified in the priorities from self-evaluation. A great deal of information about pupils' progress and welfare is shared in formal staff meetings and informally at other times, particularly about those pupils needing extra support, and clearly indicates the excellent care which is shown to pupils and which lies at the heart of the school's ethos. The pupils are particularly appreciative of the support and care shown to them by the headmaster in his greeting every morning.
- 5.4 Management is satisfactory. Heads of department have produced schemes of work which vary in quality but are good overall, and they have suitable oversight of planning. They are also responsible for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning through lesson observation, a recommendation at the time of the previous inspection, but this is not undertaken sufficiently diligently or regularly by all middle

managers so that it has a positive impact on the pupils' achievement. The quality of scrutiny of pupils' books is also variable, with some department heads being more rigorous than others. Some management processes are not firmly embedded in the school's routines, for example the appraisal system is not currently undertaken and so training cannot be linked appropriately to need. Staff are well qualified and deployed effectively to give the support required to meet the needs of most pupils, particularly those with LDD, SEN or EAL. Staff have been trained in the important areas of safeguarding and welfare, health and safety, and show high levels of care and concern for pupils, implementing all school policies well. The induction of new staff is carried out carefully.

- 5.5 A centralised register accurately records the recruitment checks carried out on staff, governors and volunteers when they are appointed and all staff have been checked with the Criminal Records Bureau. In the past, checks undertaken by supply agencies were not recorded in writing for the school by the agency involved and the school's contract did not detail this requirement. However, the most recent agency's contract has been set up under the correct procedures, and all previous contracts and details have now been completed. Accommodation is used to best advantage and is well maintained, having been reassessed and remodelled in some areas in response to the previous inspection recommendation.

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

- 5.6 The quality of the links with parents, carers and guardians is good and supports the pupils' achievements and personal development well, in line with the aims of the school. The vast majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very satisfied with all areas of school life. All were positive about the curriculum, the fact that the school promotes worthwhile attitudes and values, and that information about the school was readily available. They were also content with the ease of communication. Inspectors agree with these positive views. No concern was raised by a significant number of parents.
- 5.7 Opportunities for involvement in the life of the school arise throughout the year. Parents' events include the Christmas Fayre and major concerts which are well attended, and some are successful fund-raisers. The parents' association provides a forum through which social events and activities can be enjoyed and, in addition, gives other valuable support for the school's needs, such as work experience placements. The chair of the parents' association sits on the board of governors and acts as a helpful link between these stakeholders.
- 5.8 Parents and prospective parents are provided with the required information about the school through the new and extensively developed website. Parents also receive useful news about all aspects of school life in a variety of ways. The school publications are interesting and celebrate what More House stands for very well; the helpful weekly newsletters remind parents about future events and recent achievements, the best of which are consolidated in the termly and annual magazines. The school arranges for formal meetings between staff and parents once a year at which their daughter's progress and welfare are discussed; however, parents are welcome to discuss their daughter's educational development at any time. Reports are provided twice per year; these include some curricular information, helpful reference to a girl's personal development and, in addition, each pupil's written reflection on her performance. Not all subject reports have sufficient reference to the recent progress made in specific skills, knowledge and

understanding, and the inclusion of targets for the future is not yet reliably established.

- 5.9 Evidence indicates that the policy and procedure for dealing with complaints is now secure, although, in the past, the policy and procedural records were not sufficiently detailed. The head makes himself available every morning on the door, and the school encourages parents to be in contact whenever they need and to raise their concerns immediately.

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 and vice-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 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 Elizabeth Coley

Mrs Valerie Bidwell

Mr James Wilding

Reporting Inspector

Former Headmistress, GSA school

Principal, ISA school