



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**BRITISH SCHOOLS OVERSEAS**

**INSPECTION REPORT ON  
BRIGHTON COLLEGE ABU DHABI**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Brighton College Abu Dhabi

Full Name of School	<b>Brighton College Abu Dhabi</b>		
Address	<b>Bloom Gardens Abu Dhabi PO Box 129444 UNITED ARAB EMIRATES</b>		
Telephone Number	<b>+971(0)28156500</b>		
Fax Number	<b>+971(0)28156520</b>		
Email Address	<b>info@brightoncollege.ae</b>		
Headmaster	<b>Mr Ken Grocott</b>		
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Ragheed Shanti</b>		
Age Range	<b>3 to 16</b>		
Total Number of Pupils	<b>1124</b>		
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed</b>		
Numbers by Age	0-2:	5-13:	<b>761</b>
	3-5:	13-16:	<b>146</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	<b>1124</b>	
Inspection dates	<b>17 Nov 2013 to 20 Nov 2013</b>		

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI Schedule* for the inspection of British schools overseas. The inspection consists of two parts: a preliminary two-day visit followed by a four-day (team) inspection.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is a body approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting schools in England and overseas. As such, ISI reports to the English Department for Education (DfE) on the extent to which schools meet the relevant Standards for British Schools Overseas and the *ISI Framework* requirements. ISI is also the agency responsible for the inspection of schools in membership of the Associations of the Independent Schools Council (ISC). Accordingly, ISI inspections of British schools overseas are required to:

- help schools to improve the quality and effectiveness of pupils' education and of the care for their welfare;
- provide objective and reliable inspection reports which help schools to recognise and build on their strengths and to identify and remedy any weaknesses;
- inform parents and the wider public of the quality of British schools overseas by placing reports in the public domain;
- report to the DfE the extent to which schools comply with the published Standards for British Schools Overseas;
- where applicable, assure ISC Associations that their member schools maintain the quality of provision expected.

ISI inspection is for the benefit of the pupils in the schools and through public reporting makes the information available to parents, governments and the wider community.

Inspections for British schools overseas follow closely the framework and guidance for independent school inspection in England. The major difference is that schools in England must comply with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, which do not apply with legal validity to schools outside the United Kingdom. However, the inspection of overseas schools takes account where possible of compliance with any local requirements and it judges the extent to which the schools comply with the British Government's Standards for British Schools Overseas. The range of these Standards is as follows.

1. The quality of education provided by the school (Curriculum, Teaching and Assessment).
2. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
3. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils.
4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff.
5. The premises and accommodation.
6. The provision of information for parents, carers and others.
7. The school's procedures for handling complaints.
8. The quality of provision for boarding.
9. Leadership and management of the 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 or company law.**

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Brighton College Abu Dhabi was founded in September 2011 as an English curriculum day school based on similar principles to its UK counterpart. It occupies purpose-built premises approximately half way between Abu Dhabi city centre and the international airport, and forms part of the new Bloom Gardens estate. Initially opening with pupils up to Year 9, it has expanded to provide education for boys and girls up to Year 11, with a sixth form planned to open in September 2014. Governors are drawn from members of the private company owning and operating the school, with representation from Brighton College in the UK. A new headmaster joined the school at the start of the autumn term 2012.
- 1.2 The school strives to create a family-orientated, respectful and vibrant community for all its pupils. To this end, it aims to stimulate a love of learning, and develop knowledge and skills to enable its pupils to understand and question the world around them and prepare them for their future lives. It seeks to develop an enthusiasm for school life beyond the classroom and a respect for other people, and to inspire pupils to value each other's talents and contribution to the school community. The school strives to produce well-educated, respectful and intellectually curious young people who are ready to take a full, active and positive role in the life of the United Arab Emirates and the world.
- 1.3 Brighton College is composed of three sections which have separate headteachers and enjoy significant day-to-day responsibility for their own organisation and management. The school provides education for 1124 pupils (552 boys and 572 girls), of whom 443 are in the pre-preparatory section (with 217 in the Early Years for children up to five), 535 are in the preparatory section from Years 3 to 8, and 146 are in the senior section from Years 9 to 11. The school has identified 83 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 68 are provided with additional support for their learning. Pupils are drawn from 59 nationalities, of which about forty per cent are British. Although approximately 400 pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), many are bilingual and fluent in English. As a result, only 70 receive specialist support for their English. Pupils take a range of standardised aptitude and ability tests at different stages throughout the school. These indicate that the ability profile at the younger end of the preparatory section is slightly above the UK national average. The ability profile at the top of the preparatory section and in the senior section is above the UK national average.
- 1.4 English National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The Early Years year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following table.

### **Early Years**

School	NC name
Foundation Stage 1	Nursery
Foundation Stage 2	Reception

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **2.(a) Main findings**

- 2.1 Brighton College Abu Dhabi is highly successful in meeting its stated aims. The standards achieved by pupils are good and, for those in the Early Years, excellent. Pupils of all ages make good short-term progress, and this is excellent for those with EAL in terms of the improvement in their command of English. Pupils have exemplary attitudes to their work. They are keen to succeed and have excellent learning skills. Pupils' achievement and learning are significantly enhanced by the excellent curricular provision for pupils of all ages and by the opportunities to develop their interests and talents in extra-curricular activities. The good quality of teaching, a significant proportion of which is excellent, also enhances pupils' educational experience. In a small proportion of lessons, the teaching does not always provide sufficient opportunity for pupils to think and learn at a high enough level.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development at all ages, including in the Early Years, is of a particularly high quality and pupils demonstrate excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. They are emotionally very mature for their age and show great self-discipline and a strong sense of responsibility for themselves and others. Their behaviour is very good, and they form warm and supportive relationships with their teachers, who provide a very high standard of pastoral care. Arrangements to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety are excellent.
- 2.3 The high quality of educational and pastoral provision and the standards achieved by pupils are well supported by good governance and excellent leadership and management at all levels in all three sections. Self-evaluation is a strong feature of the school's work, so that the leadership knows what works well, and what needs improvement. Links with parents are strongly developed by the school's staff, although those with governors are still evolving. Parents are highly satisfied with nearly all aspects of the main academic and pastoral areas of the school, especially the range of subjects, and the pupils' attitudes and behaviour. A small minority are concerned about the extra-curricular provision, information about children's progress and the school's handling of concerns. Inspection evidence does not support these views. Pupils' questionnaire responses reveal that the great majority enjoy school and feel they are making good progress. They raised some concerns about the opportunities for leadership and expressing their views. Inspection evidence and the opinions of the many pupils spoken to did not support these views.

## **2.(b) Action points**

### **(i) Compliance with the Standards for British Schools Overseas**

(The range of the Standards for British Schools Overseas is given in the Preface)

2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Standards for British Schools Overseas.

### **(ii) Recommendation for further improvement**

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

1. Develop and share teaching strategies and practices to ensure that all lessons meet the learning needs of all pupils.

### **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' achievement throughout the school is good. They are well educated in line with the school's aims. Pupils' achievement in the Early Years is excellent. Children in Nursery understand the concept of position in numeracy lessons. In Reception many write short descriptive sentences about life in Abu Dhabi. These youngest children show great self-discipline and co-operation with each other. By Year 2, they understand the concept of grid references in mathematics. In the preparatory section, pupils have a good grounding in basic subject knowledge, enabling them both to consolidate and enhance their understanding. Pupils in Year 4 use technical language to explain their investigations of electricity, and in Year 6 they identify different literary devices in a range of poems. Pupils in the senior section are well prepared to sit public examinations. Pupils across the school show excellent speaking and listening skills for their age. Skills in writing are good, especially for the native English speakers. Significant numbers of pupils enjoy reading for pleasure. Numeracy skills are strong and are evident in a range of different subjects. Pupils show good competence in their use of information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils of all ages respond well to opportunities to think creatively and imaginatively, and the most able demonstrate higher levels of knowledge and understanding when learning tasks encourage them to do so. Pupils achieve significant success in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, especially in sport. Pupils show considerable skill and commitment in music and drama, and their organisational skills, both of themselves and others, are at a high level, shown in a number of enterprise and entrepreneurial projects in which even the youngest pupils are included.
- 3.2 The school has not participated in any UK national tests, and the first year group of pupils will sit GCSE examinations in the summer of 2014. A small group of bilingual and able linguists took GCSE examinations in a range of foreign languages in the summer of 2013 and achieved A\* grades in all subjects taken. Pupils' overall attainment in the preparatory and senior sections thus cannot be measured in relation to performance against a fixed English national average but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be above English national age-related expectations. Inspection evidence drawn from pupils' responses in interviews and their performance in lessons and written work confirms this judgement.
- 3.3 The school is too new to make judgements of pupils' long-term progress. In the short term, in lessons and the work seen, pupils make good progress in relation to their ability. Those with SEND make good progress and those with EAL make excellent progress, shown by the improvement in their English and performance in standardised tests. The most able pupils also make good progress, especially in the preparatory section.
- 3.4 Pupils' attitudes to their work and the quality of their learning throughout the school are excellent. They are invariably keen to do well and respond thoughtfully, enthusiastically and logically. This is especially seen when they are stimulated and inspired by the best teaching, and when the tasks given to them are challenging and enable them to think for themselves. Pupils enjoy their participation in their many extra-curricular activities and trips. They co-operate very well together in group tasks in lessons, and in teams and performances. Many pupils show considerable initiative in working and thinking independently. In the pre-inspection

questionnaires, almost all pupils felt that they are making good progress in their work and learning.

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

- 3.5 The contribution of the curriculum to the standards achieved by pupils is excellent throughout the school and supports its aims.
- 3.6 The curriculum in the pre-preparatory section supports all relevant areas of learning and provides an effective balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities. It is enriched by the use of specialist teachers for physical education (PE), Arabic and ICT. Both indoor and outdoor areas provide a stimulating learning environment for these pupils. Through child-centred learning, all abilities and development needs are well catered for.
- 3.7 In the preparatory section, the curriculum is broad, balanced and well planned to enable pupils to achieve high standards. It includes all the subjects of the English National Curriculum, with a suitably strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy. It is supplemented by the addition of Arabic, enabling children to learn the *lingua franca* of their host country. The school also offers tasters in French, Spanish, Latin and Mandarin from which pupils choose two to study further. In addition, the school has crafted an imaginative programme of social studies and is preparing a formal programme of valuable study skills. Thoughtful planning enables a worthwhile programme of learning activities to run in parallel with the compulsory programme of advanced Arabic and Islamic Studies pursued by local pupils. Other pupils study the "Story of our Land", a syllabus covering both the language and culture of the UAE.
- 3.8 Curricular provision in the senior section leads to the GCSE examinations at the end of Year 11 in English language and literature, mathematics, and three separate sciences, to which pupils add additional subjects chosen from an extensive list which includes several foreign and classical languages. Curriculum planning is well advanced to enable Year 11 pupils to progress into the new sixth form in September 2014.
- 3.9 Across all sections of the school, a stimulating learning environment is enhanced by attractive, well-presented displays in classrooms and public areas. The library is well used for study and private reading. A wide range of well-chosen extra-curricular activities and off-site clubs ensures that pupils enjoy the opportunity to develop intellectual, creative and physical skills outside the classroom, too. The opportunities these provide enable pupils to grow in confidence, develop skills and learn how to be gracious in both success and defeat. This strong provision does not support the view of a small proportion of parents whose questionnaire responses indicated their dissatisfaction with the scope and breadth of the programme. A comprehensive range of community projects and educational trips both supplements and complements the taught curriculum. Most notable of these is the recent trek in Nepal.
- 3.10 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is a strong feature of the school's provision and reflects its aims and ethos. Pupils develop a wide range of useful life skills, understand the meaning of national and global citizenship, and develop a strong sense of responsibility for the good of the community.
- 3.11 The curriculum ensures that all pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. A strong working relationship between the academic deputy heads of

each of the three sections ensures effective co-ordination and continuity as pupils progress through the school. Careful and thorough planning also ensures that pupils with EAL and SEND are well supported by both their subject teachers as well as by specialist staff. Provision to challenge and extend the learning experience for the most able and talented pupils is effectively created, especially in the preparatory section, but is not always implemented fully in some lessons.

### **3.(c) The contribution of teaching**

- 3.12 The quality of teaching in all sections of the school is good.
- 3.13 A significant proportion of the teaching is excellent. In a substantial majority of lessons, the teaching effectively promotes pupils' achievement and progress, and successfully supports the aims of the school to provide pupils with a foundation of knowledge and a body of skills to prepare them for their future lives. It also successfully imparts a love of learning for its own sake, especially in year groups not constrained by public examination preparation. Teaching in the Early Years is particularly characterised by highly effective planning which adapts different learning tasks to the needs of individual children.
- 3.14 Teachers have a very secure knowledge and understanding of their subjects and an infectious enthusiasm for sharing this with their pupils. Significant emphasis is placed on the understanding of pupils' learning needs and meeting these. Lesson planning nearly always provides an interesting sequence of learning tasks and activities, usually very well matched to the different abilities within the class.
- 3.15 Lessons are typically characterised by lively and creative teaching that inspires the pupils' own creative thinking, and by carefully focused questioning techniques that encourage pupils to think for themselves. This was seen at all ages and in a wide variety of subjects; for example in a Year 2 PSHE lesson where pupils distinguished between rights and responsibilities, and in Year 4 where pupils assembled their arguments for and against a given proposition. In Year 7, the effective teaching stimulated pupils to analyse the techniques used in the speeches of Martin Luther King and in geography, older pupils were encouraged to analyse independently data gained from a volcanic eruption. Such teaching techniques, coupled with praise and encouragement, stimulate pupils' independent thinking and learning and enhance their progress, as well as encouraging them to show initiative and a willingness to take risks and work in unfamiliar situations. Learning resources including ICT are used very well by teachers and enable pupils to think and investigate for themselves.
- 3.16 Relationships between staff and pupils are exceptionally supportive, and teachers know their pupils very well. This enables children, especially in the Early Years, to feel confident and secure. The great majority of staff thoroughly understand the needs of individual pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, and plan the work in lessons accordingly to provide the necessary support. Specialist staff from the EAL and learning support departments liaise closely with class and subject teachers. Great care is taken by teachers when arranging pairs and groups during lessons to provide pupils with different needs the opportunity to work collaboratively to the advantage of each. Teaching frequently provides a good level of challenge for the most able pupils, but opportunities to provide suitably open and flexible tasks are occasionally missed. Pupils of all ages value their teachers' encouraging comments, as well as the stickers and credits that are generously awarded, and they respond positively to the advice their teachers give them on how to improve. The support and input of teaching and learning assistants are highly effective and contribute significantly to the progress of the younger pupils.

- 3.17 In the small number of cases where teaching is less effective, the pace of the lesson is slow and the work is not sufficiently closely matched to different pupils' abilities and learning needs. Such teaching can result in pupils marking time while waiting for others to finish tasks and fail to provide pupils with opportunities to think for themselves or take responsibility for their learning. As a result, they lose concentration, their interest wanes, and their progress is slower.
- 3.18 Pupils' work is marked frequently and the standard of marking is generally good although its quality varies between subjects. At its best, marking includes many helpful comments and suggestions about how pupils can improve the standard of their work and set targets to accelerate their progress. There are many examples where more challenging follow-up questions are posed. Assessment of pupils' progress over time has been an area of recent focus across the school. A new tracking system provides a powerful and helpful tool to monitor progress and identify under-performing pupils so that necessary remedial action can be taken.

## **4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

- 4.1 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent throughout the school.
- 4.2 The school is highly successful in achieving its aims to promote self-awareness and respect for others and to prepare pupils for adult life, and the outstanding personal development of pupils of all ages is one of the great strengths of the school.
- 4.3 Pupils demonstrate exceptional levels of self-awareness and self-worth. They enthusiastically support and embrace the values of tolerance and mutual support, and respond thoughtfully and perceptively to issues presented in assemblies and PSHE lessons. They are emotionally very mature for their age and are courteous, thoughtful and reflective. They readily appreciate the successes of others. Pupils acquire a sense of wonder about the world around them and the non-material aspects of life. From the Early Years upwards, pupils' self-confidence grows as they rapidly develop their ability to communicate their thoughts and feelings.
- 4.4 Pupils develop an exceptional moral sense from the beginning of their time in the school. They are instinctively aware of the concepts of right and wrong, which govern their behaviour. The school's 'Value of the Month', such as respect and tolerance, enables pupils to appreciate and understand moral values, their own personal choices, and the importance of living in a harmonious community. They show great respect for one another and are extremely courteous and considerate in their dealings with each other and with adults. They work and play together with friendliness and mutual support. Older pupils provide admirable role models for younger pupils.
- 4.5 Pupils' social awareness is extremely well developed, and they are very eager to contribute to the well-being of the school community. In pupil questionnaires, a significant proportion felt that they had insufficient opportunities to take on responsibilities or that their views were not listened to. Inspection evidence does not support this. At all ages, starting in the pre-preparatory section, pupils willingly take on responsibility as members of the highly effective, democratically elected, and well-regarded pupil councils. They take their roles seriously in representing the views and ideas of their peers in suggesting proposals for school improvement. Pupils readily help their peers and younger pupils and grasp opportunities to hone their leadership and team work skills in sports, music and drama productions, as prefects and monitors and in organising charity events. Pupils have a strong empathy with people in very different situations from their own, and have been enterprising in raising significant sums for many charities. All pupils, including the very youngest, have a mature awareness of the needs of others.
- 4.6 Pupils' excellent cultural awareness is readily evident in their understanding of and respect for their own culture and that of so many others represented within the pupil body. Pupils take part enthusiastically in celebrations of national and international events and festivals and benefit greatly from being part of a diverse, multi-national community. Pre-preparatory pupils enjoyed learning about Diwali and Chinese New Year. Many pupils recognise that they are guests in the UAE and show particular respect for their host country. Many appreciate the opportunities to visit local families. They learn much from opportunities to listen to, and participate in, the music of different countries and from visiting musicians and artists. Pupils learn

about and appreciate their own and other cultures through their lessons in art, literature and humanities.

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

- 4.7 The arrangements for welfare, health and safety are excellent.
- 4.8 Thorough and highly effective systems provide support and guidance of high quality for all pupils and support the aims of the school. These are understood and implemented efficiently by staff working with strong and enthusiastic pastoral leadership teams in all three sections. Senior section form tutors and preparatory and pre-preparatory class teachers provide high levels of care and monitor the pastoral and academic progress of the pupils. They are well supported by the work of housemasters and housemistresses. Pupils greatly appreciate the role of the school counsellor.
- 4.9 The house system is extremely well regarded by pupils who clearly feel a sense of pride and belonging to their particular houses. Pupils have regular opportunities throughout the year to represent their house in both sporting and other events and competitions, and earn house points in lessons, all of which are celebrated in assemblies.
- 4.10 Relationships between staff and pupils and among the pupils themselves are warm and supportive, and pupils state that they feel happy, safe and well cared for. Pupil leaders and class representatives feel responsible for maintaining a harmonious school community. Younger pupils especially are remarkably confident in talking to adults and welcoming visitors. Good relationships exist between different year groups.
- 4.11 Systems to promote good behaviour are effectively implemented and work well in practice. Pupils have a strong motivation to respond to clear expectations of behaviour. They appreciate the rewards system and understand the age-appropriate sanctions in place to discourage and deal with any misbehaviour that may occur. Despite the questionnaire responses of a minority, the pupils spoken to invariably felt that rewards and sanctions are almost always applied fairly and proportionately, and that pupils are treated by teachers with consistency. A whole-school policy to discourage unkindness and counter bullying is well supported by an anti-bullying charter that pupils have helped to draw up and which they enthusiastically endorse. Pupils confirm that any instances of unkindness are dealt with effectively by staff and that cases of bullying are exceptionally rare.
- 4.12 Systems to ensure child protection are effective and are enshrined in an appropriate safeguarding policy. Pupils' welfare is overseen by the school counsellor who acts as the designated child protection officer and ensures that all teaching and ancillary staff receive appropriate training in this area. Pupils' welfare is enhanced by efficient arrangements for their supervision and by imaginative use of technology to enable parents to track pupils' arrival times on the bus journeys at the end of the day.
- 4.13 Measures to minimise risks from fire are well managed and documented and include regular evacuation practices. The health and safety committee represents all three sections and provides effective monitoring of health and safety practices. Risk assessments are rigorous and detailed, and include school trips and different areas of the school site and premises.
- 4.14 The pupils' health needs are well met. The school clinic is well resourced, and two nurses provide a high standard of health care. In addition, an appropriate number of

staff are trained in first aid. The PSHE programme and science lessons contribute to the pupils' awareness of the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle. This includes issues of nutrition and healthy eating. A good variety and quality of food is available at lunch times. Pupils need little encouragement to take part in sport and take regular exercise.

- 4.15 The required registers to record admissions and pupils' attendance are completed accurately and stored appropriately.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 Governors provide strong and enthusiastic support for the work of the school; its rapid growth and consolidation provide testimony to their oversight in relation to the aims of the school. The local members of the governing body, with high levels of financial and business acumen, are complemented by the Brighton College UK members who provide educational experience. Local governors are building their educational expertise and have recently received training by the UK professional body for governors. Increasingly regular contact between governors and the school, recently formalised with designated governor roles within the three sections, ensures good communication with the school's leaders and gives governors effective and continuous oversight of the work of the school from Early Years to the imminent sixth form. The governors' education and finance committee provides detailed focus on educational and financial matters, and the presence on site of the parent company's general manager, herself a governor and a parent, gives the board a clear insight into day-to-day matters with close monitoring and speedy responses. Governors meet termly, using video technology to include those overseas. Their high level of commitment to the school, now based increasingly on its educational and pastoral impact, rather than simply on business principles, supports and sustains forward momentum and continued success.
- 5.3 The school's parent company, through the governing body, has invested significantly in human and material resources with the success of the school as its top priority. There is always at least one governor present at major school events. Almost daily consultation between governors, school leaders and Brighton College UK supports thoroughly the welfare and success of the pupils and informs development as the school grows. There is, as yet, little communication between the governing body and parents, who feel they have little information about the important work done by the parent company and the governing body in the development of the school.
- 5.4 Governors fulfil their responsibilities for child protection and for welfare, health and safety matters and are developing a more formal approach to monitoring these areas. A review of the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements has been initiated, and the school's compliance with the complex local regulations has been monitored efficiently by a committee of governors.

### **5.(b) The quality of leadership and management**

- 5.5 The overall quality of leadership and management is excellent.
- 5.6 At all levels and in all three sections, the work of leaders and managers makes a significant and important contribution to the successful fulfilment of the school's aims, and the strong achievement and personal development of pupils of all ages. Considering the newness of the school and the short period of time in which so many staff and pupils have been there, the school has made excellent progress in creating and maintaining effective systems and structures to sustain its work. The school's senior leaders collaborate well together and consult and communicate very effectively with other staff. Academic and pastoral initiatives are well supported and underpinned by clear policies and protocols, which are regularly reviewed for their effectiveness.

- 5.7 Senior leaders promote a strong ethos and readily identifiable culture, and a clear sense of unity is developed among staff at all levels. New staff rapidly feel part of a team that knows what it wants to achieve for the pupils. Although the three sections take separate responsibility for their day-to-day management and administration, they do so within a clear framework of shared commitment and a common sense of purpose.
- 5.8 The school's commitment to self-evaluation and critical reflection on its strengths and areas for development is particularly strong. Such initiatives involve the contributions of academic and pastoral leaders both within and across sections, and identify clear and achievable targets and priorities for the school's future improvement and further expansion. These are enshrined in various school and department improvement plans. Systems for monitoring educational practice and reviewing its effectiveness are being steadily refined, although procedures to ensure the sharing of the best practices in teaching are not yet fully effective.
- 5.9 Staff are well qualified and have appropriate subject expertise and experience. An appraisal system for teaching staff has been created and is already helping to identify professional development opportunities and training needs. All staff are trained in child protection, and many in other specialist health and safety areas as well. The staff recruitment process is complicated by the need to meet diverse local as well as international requirements, and some initial delays, outside the school's control, have occurred in the past. All staff undergo rigorous local background and security checks and, for many, the required UK checks of their suitability.

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

- 5.10 The quality of the school's links with its parents is excellent.
- 5.11 The strong partnership forged with parents makes a significant contribution to the fulfilment of the school's aims. The school's leaders place the development of high-quality links with parents as one of their top priorities, and monitor parental opinion closely. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents indicated a high level of satisfaction with all major academic and pastoral areas of school life. They particularly approved of the range of subjects available, the worthwhile values and attitudes promoted by the school, the progress made by their children and the standards of behaviour. A small minority of parents were less satisfied with the provision for SEND, information provided about their children's progress, the availability of extra-curricular activities and the handling of concerns. Inspection evidence did not support these views.
- 5.12 Parents have many opportunities to be involved in the school's life and work. They attend curriculum evenings and workshops on supporting pupils' learning. They attend assemblies for younger pupils, concerts, plays and sporting events, and make significant contributions to various festivals and theme days. An on-site coffee shop for parents and the further development of the role and influence of parent representatives enhance their involvement as part of the school community. Staff make themselves readily available at the beginning and end of school sessions and appointments to discuss individual children can easily be made. Parents appreciate the parent/teacher meetings for which the pupils can prepare the agendas themselves, even in the pre-preparatory section. An active association for parents enhances the links between parents and the school.
- 5.13 The close links with parents are enhanced by the many types of information made available to them, much of it using on-line and other electronic methods of

communication. Parents are provided with a wide range of handbooks and documents, newsletters and other publications. The school makes available the required policies through its informative website. The reporting system is of a high standard. Regular full reports and interim progress reports are clear and keep parents very well informed about their children's achievement and progress, and help their children to improve their work further.

- 5.14 Concerns and formal complaints from parents are treated seriously and promptly, clearly recorded, and resolved with sensitivity in accordance with published procedures.

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and staff 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 tutor periods, school council meetings, and assemblies. Inspectors visited the school clinic and took lunch with pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined documentation and records made available by the school.

### Inspectors

Mr Timothy Holgate	Reporting Inspector
Mr Gerard Flynn	Junior Team Inspector (Former Headmaster, COBIS/IAPS school)
Mrs Penny Forsyth	Junior Team Inspector (Former headteacher, IAPS school)
Mrs Ann McDonnell	Junior Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Karen Mehta	Junior Team Inspector (Head of School, COBIS/IAPS school)
Mrs Kathleen Silvester	Junior Team Inspector (Former Head of School, IAPS school)
Mrs Olivia Boyer	Senior Team Inspector (Former Head of Department, HMC school)
Mr Philip Couzens	Senior Team Inspector (Headmaster, COBIS school)