



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**BRITISH SCHOOLS OVERSEAS**

**INSPECTION REPORT ON  
KING'S COLLEGE, THE BRITISH SCHOOL MURCIA**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## King's College, The British School Murcia

|                        |  |            |        |            |
|------------------------|--|------------|--------|------------|
| Full Name of School    | <b>King's College, The British School Murcia</b> |            |        |            |
| Address                | <b>Calle Pez Volador s/n</b>                     |            |        |            |
|                        | <b>Urbanización La Torre Golf Resort</b>         |            |        |            |
|                        | <b>0709 Roldán</b>                               |            |        |            |
|                        | <b>Murcia</b>                                    |            |        |            |
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| Headteacher            | <b>Mr Stefan Rumistrzewicz</b>                   |            |        |            |
| Chair of Governors     | <b>Sir Roger Fry CBE</b>                         |            |        |            |
| Age Range              | <b>1 to 18</b>                                   |            |        |            |
| Total Number of Pupils | <b>474</b>                                       |            |        |            |
| Gender of Pupils       | <b>Mixed (252 boys; 222 girls)</b>               |            |        |            |
| Numbers by Age         | 0-2:   | <b>18</b>  | 5-11:  | <b>272</b> |
|                        | 3-5:   | <b>60</b>  | 11-18: | <b>124</b> |
| Number of Day Pupils   | Total:   | <b>474</b> |        |            |
| Number of Boarders     | Total:   | <b>0</b>   |        |            |
| Inspection dates       | <b>27 April 2015 to 30 April 2015</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 King's College, The British School Murcia is a co-educational day school for pupils aged from 18 months to eighteen years. It is situated in the La Torre Golf resort, near Roldan in south-eastern Spain. It opened in 2007 in purpose-built buildings as a joint project between the King's Group and Polaris World, a Spanish construction company. The school remained under this control until September 2014 when it was purchased outright by the King's Group. The school is divided into three sections according to age: the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) with pupils under five; a junior school with pupils aged five to eleven; and a senior school and sixth form with pupils up to the age of eighteen. The school has two classes in each year up to and including Year 6 and anticipates two-form entry into the senior school from September 2015. The senior school currently has one-form entry.
- 1.2 The school is now governed by the King's Group board of governors, which takes all strategic decisions, delegating more detailed planning for all its schools to the schools' management boards. In common with all King's Group schools, it operates under the direction and management of the chief executive officer (CEO) and the headteacher.
- 1.3 The school has not been previously inspected by ISI. However, it was inspected by the National Association of British Schools in Spain (NABSS) in April 2013. Since then a new theatre has been opened, the school has increased its sporting activities and its links with outside agencies, and it has re-organised its senior leadership team and appointed a new headteacher.
- 1.4 The school's mission is to provide high-quality British education that delivers a transformative learning experience to all its pupils. It aims to enable children to achieve their academic ambitions and lifetime careers by providing engaging and effective teaching based on its core values and the best and most up-to-date UK educational practice. At the same time it aims to nurture individual talents with an emphasis on educating the whole child. It aims to provide a safe and secure environment in which the pupils can thrive educationally as well as socially and emotionally.
- 1.5 At the time of the inspection there were 474 pupils on the school roll: 252 boys and 222 girls. Of these, 78 were in the EYFS, 272 in the junior school and 124 in the senior school (including 20 in the sixth form). The vast majority of the pupils are Spanish, resulting in approximately 370 pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL). Sixty pupils receive specific English language support. Thirty-two pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive specialist learning support from the school. One hundred and thirty-one pupils are in a year group above where they would be placed in an English school, because of Spanish admission requirements.
- 1.6 The ability profile of the EYFS and the junior school is slightly below the British national average. The ability profile of the senior school is in line overall with the UK average in Year 7, and slightly above the UK average in Year 10. A fairly wide spread of abilities are represented in all years.
- 1.7 The school follows the English EYFS framework and the English National Curriculum. It also provides elements of a Spanish education following programmes of study stipulated by the Spanish Ministry of Education.

- 1.8 English National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school in the Early Years and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence is shown in the following table.

***Early Years***

| School      | NC name              |
|-------------|----------------------|
| Pre-Nursery | 18 months to 3 years |
| Nursery     | 3 years to 4 years   |
| Reception   | 4 years to 5 years   |

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

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

- 2.1 Starting from the EYFS pupils make generally good progress as they go through the school. The progress of more able pupils is in line with their peers whilst that of those with SEND is on average appropriate. Children in the EYFS respond confidently to all the educational experiences on offer. Happy coming to school, they show an appropriate level of independence and are well able to make their own learning choices. They respond well to being taught in English. In the junior school pupils are articulate and have good basic skills of literacy and numeracy. They have good knowledge, skills and understanding of the subjects they study, attributes which continue into the senior school. Senior pupils communicate articulately, work collaboratively and given the opportunity, show a willingness to work creatively and independently. In all the sciences pupils apply mathematics easily. Information and communication technology (ICT) is not widely utilised and as a result pupils' skills are insufficiently developed.
- 2.2 The curriculum is good. It is broad at all levels including the sixth form. The opportunity to learn both German and French is a strength. Equally broad is the range of extra-curricular activities. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is gradually being developed. Teaching is good and some is excellent especially when there is very good attention to the needs of the whole ability range. Spanish language teaching is a strong feature. The tracking of pupils in all years is a new initiative as is the school's assessment policy. In line with this the marking of pupils' work is generally good, and some is excellent, especially in the senior school and the sixth form. Pupils say strongly that as a result they know what they must do to improve and inspectors agree.
- 2.3 Pupils are motivated, polite, tolerant and courteous. A strong element of mutual respect exists between staff and pupils. This promotes a very positive and mature attitude which characterises the school. In all sections of the school pupils benefit from excellent systems of pastoral support and from secure procedures for welfare, health and safety, and for safeguarding.
- 2.4 Governance is excellent: governors have ambitious aims for the success of the school. Leadership and management at all levels are good. The school has been successful in recent staff appointments. Arrangements for checking the suitability of staff are secure and recorded in accordance with regulatory requirements. The opportunities provided for staff development show commitment to staff support and retention. Links with parents are good and improving.

## **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)

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

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

2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Provide effective provision for pupils of all abilities by drawing on the most effective existing practice in the school.
2. Improve the promotion of creativity, independent working, and the development of subject specific skills in art, design and technology (DT) and ICT.
3. Fulfil the requirements of the present National Curriculum in ICT.
4. Increase the amount of special support for pupils with identified special needs.
5. In the EYFS make better use of the outside area.

### **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 the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills is good.
- 3.2 The achievement indicates that pupils are working well towards meeting the school's aim of enabling them to achieve their academic ambitions and lifetime careers.
- 3.3 The overall quality and standards in the EYFS are good. Children in the EYFS respond confidently to all the educational experiences on offer. They are happy coming to school, they show an appropriate level of independence, and are well able to make their own choices during child-initiated activities. Children in the Pre-Nursery can join in songs and play cooperatively. In the Nursery, children begin to recognise some phonic sounds, and in Reception children can use their phonic skills to write simple sentences and count to 20 and beyond.
- 3.4 In the junior school, pupils display secure knowledge, skills and understanding of the material being covered in lessons and the overall standard of literacy and numeracy is good. In Year 6 pupils can order fractions having first put fractions in terms of a common denominator. Pupils' skills and progression in learning in ICT are not at the expected level. Pupils are articulate and they can successfully identify the steps and strategies needed to make further progress. Their standards of presentation are very good: older pupils generally become proficient in a clear cursive style of writing and take great care in the neatness of their exercise books. They show success in the variety of creative activities they are offered.
- 3.5 In the senior school, pupils show a good level of knowledge, understanding and skills across most subject areas. They communicate articulately, work collaboratively and, given the opportunity, show a willingness to work creatively and independently. In all the sciences pupils apply mathematics easily. Pupils in A-level mathematics displayed a high level of competence and of logical thinking. ICT is not widely utilised and as a result the pupils' skills are insufficiently developed.
- 3.6 University applicants have gained entry to their first choice of universities but the numbers are not yet statistically significant.
- 3.7 Outside the classroom, pupils have achieved a good level of success. Drama productions are of a good standard and the Year 5 and 6 production was well received during inspection week. Pupils have achieved Grade 5 music theory successes and some are entered for Grade 6 music exams. Sports teams have enjoyed success in local tournaments and close links with local schools have provided opportunities for greater sporting participation. A growing number of pupils have taken part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, with five pupils working towards the gold level. National representation has, for individual pupils, been achieved in cricket and horse riding and one pupil has recently won a Spanish creative writing competition. Pupils are actively encouraged to attend local sports clubs to enhance their sporting talents in their own time, as in gymnastics.
- 3.8 The following analysis uses English national data for the years 2012 to 2014, the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Attainment in English national tests at age 11 has been overall below the UK average for maintained primary schools. However, results in writing in 2013 and 2014 were above average and results in English in 2012 and mathematics in 2014 were similar to the UK average. GCSE performance has been similar to the UK

average for maintained schools. Results have improved since 2012, and in 2014 were above the UK average for maintained schools.

- 3.9 IGCSE results in English Language, Spanish and history have been above worldwide averages. Results in English Literature have been similar to the worldwide averages. Mathematics results have been lower than worldwide averages. IGCSE results in French and Spanish have also been above, and EAL results similar to, the UK average for schools entering pupils for IGCSE.
- 3.10 The level of attainment at GCSE, and the nationally standardised progress data that is available, indicate that pupils, most of whom have EAL, have been making appropriate progress relative to the average for pupils of similar abilities, with progress in 2014 being good. This is corroborated by inspectors' classroom observations and scrutiny of pupils' work. The progress of more able pupils is in line with their peers. On average pupils with SEND make appropriate progress.
- 3.11 From the EYFS onwards, pupils have a good attitude to their learning. They are enthusiastic and diligent and engage fully with the challenges their teachers set. They persevere in their work and greatly enjoy being pupils in this school. Pupils are readily responsive, offering answers and opinions articulately and confidently. When working in pairs or groups, they co-operate very well and are able to apply skills appropriately. Pupils have a strong work ethic and apply themselves conscientiously to their work.

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

- 3.12 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils) is good.
- 3.13 The provision supports pupils' opportunity to progress towards realising their personal and academic goals, in line with the school's aims.
- 3.14 The EYFS curriculum is well planned and ensures that most children reach the expected levels of development and specific areas of learning by the end of Reception. A good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities is matched to the children's interests.
- 3.15 The junior curriculum has an appropriate focus on literacy, numeracy and science. Breadth is provided by the use of topics which incorporate aspects of history, geography, art, religious education (RE), DT and ICT. The pupils also benefit from effective teaching and learning in Spanish as they follow the legally required programme. However, the topic work lacks challenge for the more able and gives them and others insufficient opportunity for independent and creative work. The curriculum in art, DT and ICT gives insufficient attention to the continuity and progression of specific subject skills. The junior school is aware of the need to incorporate the requirements of the new National Curriculum, notably in ICT. A new programme of study for personal, social and health education (PSHE) has recently been developed but, at the time of the inspection, this had not been fully implemented. Equally, a specific programme for gifted and talented pupils is at the planning stage.
- 3.16 In the senior school, and in the sixth form, the school offers a wide range of subjects and continues to enlarge its offerings. As with junior pupils the school follows the English National Curriculum as well as the Spanish legal requirements. The school has recently introduced RE as a separate subject and which has been phased into

Years 7 to 9. Timetabling enables pupils who wish to study both French and German to do so. Mandarin and business studies have also been introduced at IGCSE. Pupils who wish to specialise in sciences are able to do so. There is a good range of sixth-form subjects and the extended project is planned for 2016. The transition between Years 3 to 6 and Years 7 to 9 is under further development and for the present consists of Year 6 pupils experiencing some core Year 7 subjects. There are well-established routines for GCSE choices in Year 9 and prior to the sixth form procedures have been greatly enhanced by the use of an on-line careers advice service coupled with school guidance. PSHE in the sixth form is focused on the preparation for university life and the school draws in appropriate visiting speakers. An annual visit is arranged to the University Fair held at El Limonar School. Pupils aim to gain places in Spanish, British and American universities and plans to advise pupils on other universities are underway.

- 3.17 Initiatives have begun to further embed PSHE within the senior curriculum so that it encompasses the curriculum as well as being a subject. The curriculum fosters a sense of right and wrong as well as social awareness. Pupils are beginning to develop an awareness of religious and spiritual aspects as part of the school's implementation of RE.
- 3.18 There are limitations in the degree of support for those with SEND. In the junior school, there is some effective support, and in the senior school GCSE pupils who require extra help with English take English as a second language in place of literature. There is additional support by a teaching assistant in English classes and some learning support is provided in mathematics. However, the provision does not extend beyond these two core subjects.
- 3.19 The school has a broad range of extra-curricular activities that extend pupils' capabilities in culture, music, languages and cricket. These activities fit within the school day and sporting activities are provided within physical education (PE) lessons. During interviews, the pupils highlighted extra-curricular activities as a particular strength of the school. The school had recent success in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme with medal winners at bronze and silver levels.
- 3.20 Pupils are able to take responsibility in school in the student council, as senior prefects and also in organising inter-house activities. In the junior school, the older pupils work in younger classes to share stories and play games. This also occurs in World Book Day where sixth formers read to younger pupils. There are links with the community through charity and fund-raising activities. Pupils are directly involved with 'Reach Out' in Torrevieja that provides assistance for homeless families. This gives pupils an understanding of the plight of those less fortunate than themselves. Inter-house activities are often used as charity fund-raising events. A recent pupil 'road race' raised funds for the Red Cross and an ambulance visited the school for an awareness raising event.

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

- 3.21 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.22 Teaching overall meets the aims of the school. In EYFS teaching provides many opportunities for active learning through play and exploration. The planning of lessons and the use of resources are good. Activities are well matched to individual needs but in some sessions the opportunities to use the outside learning environment are overlooked.

- 3.23 In the junior school most teachers display good subject knowledge. In many lessons an imaginative range of methods are used to keep pupils interested and engaged. Effective questioning is used to draw out pupils' ideas. There is in the best lessons a brisk pace which strongly supports the pupils and leads to good levels of achievement. Teachers provide opportunities for the pupils to work successfully in pairs. In a minority of lessons an over-directed approach is employed which does not engage pupils. In these lessons pupils lose focus and their achievement is restricted. In several lessons observed teaching failed to cater for the wide ability range, again leading to restricted learning.
- 3.24 In the senior school lessons usually allow pupils to make progress by the use of a variety of tasks and approaches. These lessons also maintain a brisk pace, are well structured and show clear progression in pupils' learning. Clear instructions and challenge are set with tasks that take all learners into account. Teachers' subject knowledge, effective lesson planning and good use of resources also contribute to enabling progress. These features result in enjoyable lessons where pupils can engage in discussion and show their subject knowledge and application. In Spanish, for example, pupils are introduced to themes on art and architecture for discussion. In a minority of lessons observed the lesson aims were rigid and low expectations were set. The eagerness of pupils to learn keeps them well behaved but some over-directed approaches to teaching stifle the potential for pupils to extend their knowledge and skills. These weaker lessons are often characterised by an omission to engage pupils' ability to reason things out or an over-employment of routine work answering examination-style questions.
- 3.25 Across the school ICT is not widely utilised other than to project presentations. Much of pupils' work is written rather than word-processed. Also, the range of computer literacy and the functional uses of ICT in their subject work are underused and underdeveloped.
- 3.26 Marking is thorough and it usually gives pupils clear indications of how they might improve their work. Pupils of all ages expressed their appreciation of the feedback and support they receive. Thorough marking of work for examination specifications, with clear guidance and supportive comments, enables pupils to know how to improve their approach to examination assessment. Useful peer and self-assessment also feature in marking.
- 3.27 The tracking of targets has been newly introduced as well as the initiation of improved systems of recording and analysing performance and pastoral data. It is too early to make a judgement on the effectiveness of the latter initiative.
- 3.28 In their planning notes teachers identify the more able, those with SEND and those with specific language difficulties. This is not, however, translated into effective provision. The school recognises the need to develop its methods of providing for the range of needs in the classroom.
- 3.29 The homework set reinforces the importance of English and mathematics within the curriculum. Teachers create an atmosphere in which pupils feel secure and are not afraid to ask for clarification when needed. In interviews, pupils reported that their teachers were kind and friendly and they helped them to learn.
- 3.30 Teachers organise the classrooms well and use colourful and attractive environments for learning. Presentational software is used regularly by all staff as an effective teaching aid.

## **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 good.
- 4.2 The development is consonant overall with the school's emphasis on educating the whole child within an environment in which the pupils can thrive socially and emotionally, but there are areas for development.
- 4.3 The pupils are self-aware, confident and show respect for fellow pupils. Pupils are courteous and polite and have good manners. They have a good understanding and respect for the reward and sanction practices of the school. In their questionnaire responses a small minority of pupils said that teachers did not treat pupils equally but in their extended comments and in interviews these views were not corroborated.
- 4.4 The pupils have a good appreciation of the non-material aspects of life but this is somewhat uneven across the school. In extreme situations they show empathy, as, for example, in the response of older pupils to a cancer sufferer. They have a developing sense of the significance of religion in people's lives. In the junior school Year 6 pupils can describe features of world religions and there is a focus on Christian celebrations during the school year. In Year 9 pupils were observed learning about how renaissance art was driven by artists' responses to New Testament events.
- 4.5 The pupils' moral development is good. This is strongly evident throughout the school, including in the EYFS. The children showed caring and helpful behaviour towards each other and staff. The pupils have clear understanding of right and wrong. The pupils have a good awareness of those less fortunate than themselves with fundraising events occurring throughout the school year including the recent road race for the Red Cross and a 'pop star and Diva's' non-uniform day to support the local charity 'Reach Out'. Year 6 pupils talked positively of the opportunities they are given to help younger children in the school. Sixth formers also take on roles of responsibilities helping to organise sports and charity events and the 'Christmas fayre'. New pupils are welcomed to the school through an effective buddy system.
- 4.6 Good social awareness is evident throughout the school. Opportunities to exercise responsibility are taken up by pupils who spoke about an effective prefect system in the senior school and representation on the two school councils. The councils are an effective voice in the school with changes instigated as a consequence of their work including the establishment of international days and roast lunches. The junior school Eco club is working towards the silver level Eco Schools award.
- 4.7 The pupils have good but variable appreciation of the cultural diversity of the world. Pupils were able to talk of their understanding of different cultures of the world and the need for respect between different peoples. There is an international day every two years to celebrate the cultural diversity of the school. In Year 5 non-native speakers of Spanish learnt about the music and clothes worn at the Spanish festival 'La Feira de Seville'. Those studying business studies have a good economic awareness. However, pupils' understanding of British culture, public services and institutions, particularly in the senior school, is somewhat general rather than detailed. The same is true of their awareness of Western cultural traditions and European and world affairs. They were not able to talk in any detail about values such as those of democracy, liberty in its various forms and the rule of law.

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

- 4.8 The quality of the contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.9 They meet the school's aim to provide a safe and secure environment in which the pupils can thrive educationally as well as socially and emotionally.
- 4.10 In the current academic year the school has improved its arrangements for pastoral care. The school's electronic tracking arrangements, its easy communications between staff, and the alertness of staff to pupils and their development support the identification of pupils in need of special attention, provision or external help. There have been a number of cases where the school has already had demonstrable successes in identifying the need for special support, either academic or pastoral, and of providing it.
- 4.11 Rewards and sanctions work effectively to motivate and encourage pupils' personal development. The house system is very successful in promoting team spirit and pupils enjoy receiving house points. They take a great sense of pride in belonging to their house.
- 4.12 Relationships are extremely positive between staff and pupils and among pupils themselves. This is a consequence of the very high professional standards of the teachers and the work that they continuously do to promote good behaviour among those they teach.
- 4.13 At a formal level the arrangements for guarding against harassment and bullying, including cyber-bullying, are effective. The anti-bullying policy is very much in line with British guidance for overseas schools. The pupils state that arrangements are successful, including those to guard against cyber-bullying. They say that where problems have occurred they have been resolved with speed. The school keeps close records of any incidents or allegations in order to monitor patterns of behaviour.
- 4.14 Appropriate arrangements secure the health and safety of pupils and thorough attention is paid to child protection in all parts of the school including the EYFS. The designated lead's advanced training is up-to-date. All staff have recently had training at the standard level. The school maintains appropriate links with the local Spanish child protection authorities. The governors pay particular attention to their role in health and safety matters and child protection. The King's Group board as a whole carries out the annual review of the child protection policy and its operation. The school's CEO on the board is also the nominated governor for child protection matters and attends periodically and checks through the records of pupil cases.
- 4.15 For the built environment the school has effective health and safety policies and these are overseen by the school's dedicated health and safety officer. Health and safety lines of responsibility are clearly delineated. In order to discharge its responsibilities on fire prevention and safety and to meet local requirements, the school employs an external company. For example, checks are made regularly on the safety of electrical equipment. Fire drills are carried out periodically. The thorough approach to site safety provides assurance that all necessary aspects of welfare, health and safety are in good order.
- 4.16 Aside from these arrangements for the built environment, the school operates safe recruitment procedures. Since the King's Group has become the owner and the school has begun to maintain staff records, it has significantly strengthened and

updated the ways it maintains the central register of staff appointments in order to be up-to-date and in line with English practice.

- 4.17 Healthy eating is promoted in science and assemblies and by the school's provision of meals. The school has worked with the school nurse and its catering company to improve the quality of school meals. Inspectors found that school meals are nutritious. PE satisfactorily promotes the importance of physical exercise in its developing programme.
- 4.18 Health and safety training for staff takes place every autumn, covering both new and existing staff. Admission and attendance records are maintained and stored appropriately.
- 4.19 The school has a well-appointed medical room for pupils who are sick or injured. Systematic records are kept. The first-aid policy is comprehensive and follows British guidance and the school has an appropriate number of staff with first-aid qualifications. The school has a highly trained nurse and four members of staff whose training includes paediatric nursing support.

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

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

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Governance is strongly supportive of the ethos and aims of the school.
- 5.3 Governance is exercised by the King's Group board, which provides governance for all its schools. The board has a clear strategic vision and works in effective partnership with its headteachers. The board provides effective oversight of the school, including the EYFS, and discharges effectively its responsibility for educational standards, financial planning and the investment in staff, accommodation, learning resources and the safeguarding of the pupils' welfare.
- 5.4 Executive powers are delegated to the school's management board, the King's Group CEO and the school's headteacher. The appointment of the CEO as a link governor to the school provides, as in the other schools, a direct governor involvement and monitoring. Relationships with the school are positive. The CEO regularly visits the school to carry out monitoring activities.
- 5.5 The King's Group Board takes seriously its responsibilities for child protection and for welfare, health and safety, approving comprehensive policies and procedures and conducting an annual review of the child protection policy. Policies are displayed on the school's website and are reviewed annually. The current child protection policy was recently reviewed. There is an effective sub-committee structure.
- 5.6 Although most parents are happy with the quality of the school's governance, a small minority raised concerns in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire in relation to the absence of an independent body in line with those in Spanish schools. Inspectors were satisfied that the structures were appropriate to an accredited British school. The school, however, has recently adopted a local advisory council to assist the board, and to provide some parental representation. It is as yet too early to judge the impact of this new body. Governors have undertaken an appropriate amount of training. Staff welcome the visits of governors and appreciate their comments on their work.

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

- 5.7 The quality of leadership and management is good.
- 5.8 The leadership and management endeavour to promote the ambitious aims of the school. There have been recent new appointments in the leadership structure, resulting in a cohesive and effective team. The team has moved rapidly to implement a number of developments and initiatives to benefit the school, both on the pastoral side and to support teaching and learning. Many of these initiatives are at an early stage and it is too early to assess their impact. Nevertheless, inspectors considered that the school's understanding of itself is good. The leadership team is considered to be effective by pupils, parents and staff, many of whom value its openness.
- 5.9 The management, in liaison with the governors, has a good oversight of policies, especially those concerned with safe recruitment and safeguarding. In the EYFS

and primary sections a few minor safety matters were raised during the inspection visit and these were swiftly corrected.

- 5.10 In the junior school the tracking of pupils' progress has been recently redeveloped and an analysis of performance data has led to initiatives such as the introduction of a structured phonics programme and more support for pupils with SEND. This commitment to supporting those with difficulties with English, or those with learning difficulties, has not been fully extended into the secondary school. There is a strong and important commitment, by the leadership team, to the development of provision for gifted and talented pupils. The new feedback and marking policy for the whole school has been effective in setting targets for pupils. Its adoption is being closely monitored by the leadership team but at the time of the inspection it was not yet applied consistently across the whole school and in all year groups.
- 5.11 The importance of professional development for all staff is recognised by the leadership team and staff appraisal is now completed annually. The needs identified in this process have led to some high-quality training, for example, from outside experts, whilst links have been made with other schools in the King's Group. Usefully and positively, those in middle management positions are currently undertaking an IPML (International Programme for Middle Leaders) facilitator's course. Three formal lesson observations a year by the leadership team, and regular learning walks by the headteacher, contribute positively to the monitoring of teaching.
- 5.12 Within a challenging employment environment, the headteacher is endeavouring to recruit and retain high-quality staff and has been successful in recent appointments. Staff are trained in their roles in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. Their suitability and that of governors has been carefully checked.

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

- 5.13 The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians is good.
- 5.14 The school is developing a constructive relationship with parents. The school has a welcoming approach. In their responses in the parent questionnaires a small minority of parents expressed dissatisfaction with some of the aspects surveyed. Principally the aspects identified in this way were: the provision of extra-curricular activities; the special support for children with SEND; and the communication of information about their child's progress. The inspectors found that the provision of extra-curricular activities was good and there was no evidence to support the parental concern. The inspectors recognise that the quality of support for children with SEND is an aspect of the school that has recently developed and this work is continuing. Regarding communication on pupils' progress, the school has already worked to address this issue. A new format of reports is now in place and whilst at the time of inspection were not fully implemented, they are intended to adequately address parents' concerns. Reports now use a numerical system of grading pupils' progress and effort, accompanied by an explanation of the report format in both English and Spanish. Parents also have the opportunity to attend parent conference meetings once a term to discuss their child's achievements and progress.
- 5.15 All sections of the school provide useful information to parents and new parents. Parents are kept well informed through weekly letters from the headteacher, a monthly newsletter, contact books, e-mails, social media sites and coffee mornings. Both sections of the school provide helpful curriculum information. The school has worked conscientiously to provide parents with information about the curriculum that

is easily understandable by parents not familiar with British educational systems. For example, in the junior school a workshop for parents helped to explain how the English system teaches mathematics and in the senior school a presentation set out the options available for IGSCCE and A-level study. The school ensures that communications are available in both English and Spanish.

- 5.16 The school's complaints policy meets all the requirements and is implemented consistently. Inspectors found no evidence to support the minority of parents who thought that the school does not handle well the concerns raised. Inspectors found that complaints are appropriately investigated in line with published procedures, with care and sensitivity.

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and staff and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with a governors' representative, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and an assembly. 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 documentation made available by the school.

### Inspectors

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Dr Stephen Grounds  | Reporting inspector   |
| Mrs Ros Ford        | Junior Team Inspector (Former Head of Pre-Prep, IAPS school, UK)            |
| Mrs Sarah White     | Junior Team Inspector (Head, IAPS School, Belgium)                          |
| Miss Karen Tuckwell | Junior Team Inspector ( Head IAPS School, France)                           |
| Mr Andrew Hansen    | Senior Team Inspector (Former Assistant Head, COBIS School, Czech Republic) |