



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

BRITISH SCHOOLS OVERSEAS

INSPECTION REPORT ON THE ENGLISH SCHOOL, NICOSIA

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

The English School, Nicosia

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Head	Mr Graeme Garrett		
Chair of Governors	Mrs Magda Nicholson		
Age Range	11 to 18		
Total Number of Pupils	1128		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (596 boys; 532 girls)		
Numbers by Age	11-16	813	16-18 315
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	1128	
Inspection dates	24 to 27 November 2015		

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 The English School was founded in 1900 by Canon Frank Darvall Newham, an Englishman who became director of education in Cyprus and was the school's headmaster until 1936. The school began with 13 pupils but rapidly grew, drawing its students from a range of cultural communities both locally and abroad. The school changed its status in 1936 when Canon Newham gave it in trust to the colonial governor. However the school continued to be an English-medium, inter-communal school of Christian character with facilities for all pupils to practise their own form of religion as defined in the English School Management and Control Law of 1935 and its amendments.
- 1.2 The school was based at various locations around Nicosia until 1938 when it moved into the present accommodation in Strovolos. The English School for Girls was amalgamated with it in 1962, making it the first co-educational school in Cyprus. In 1960 Cyprus gained its independence and a special law was enacted which passed control of The English School to the Republic of Cyprus, which oversees the operations of the school through a board of management appointed by the council of ministers. By statute they must include at least four former pupils and two parents. The director of the British Council is an ex-officio member.
- 1.3 The events of 1974 forced the withdrawal of Turkish speaking Cypriot pupils and teachers. In 2003 the school readmitted Turkish speaking Cypriot pupils. At the time of the inspection, of the 1128 pupils on roll, almost three-quarters were native Greek speakers, one in eight was a native Turkish speaker, and one in six a native English speaker. The three groups are taught separately in their first year. The school has no standardised attainment data for pupils on entry, and does not formally identify any pupils who might have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The majority of pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) on entry.
- 1.4 The school exists to promote academic excellence through high quality processes of teaching and learning. It is committed to the principle of equal opportunities for all and seeks to uphold the rights of every individual within the school community. It celebrates diversity and its ethos is one of trust, mutual respect and understanding of each other's culture, ethnicity, religion, gender and individual needs. The school's main goal is to prepare students to access the highest quality tertiary education and to become global and democratic citizens, empowered to adopt key leadership roles in their adult lives.
- 1.5 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 and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following tables.

School	NC name
Year 1	Year 7
Year 2	Year 8
Year 3	Year 9
Year 4	Year 10
Year 5	Year 11
Year 6	Year 12
Year 7	Year 13

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The English School, Nicosia very successfully achieves its aim to promote academic excellence through high quality learning. Pupils have excellent attitudes to study, and achieve examination results at least in line and often better than those in United Kingdom selective schools. They are supported by a good quality of teaching although approaches are not adjusted for the different abilities in class. Pupils are well advised and secure places at a range of universities worldwide, many with high entry requirements. Pupils have highly developed learning skills, and are exceptionally strong mathematically. In the questionnaires almost all pupils said that they were making good progress with their work, and most parents said they were pleased with the progress made by their child. The large majority of parents were pleased with the progress made in learning English, and with the range of subjects offered. A minority of parents said that the school did not provide help to pupils with SEND, and the inspection found that the school has no policy to support such pupils. The curriculum supports pupils' academic achievement. The content of personal health and social education (PHSE) does not include all necessary aspects and the programme is not offered beyond Year 9.
- 2.2 The quality of personal development is good. Pupils have excellent spiritual and social awareness. They are considerate, helpful and polite. The behaviour of the overwhelming majority of pupils is excellent. They relate well to and support each other. Almost all pupils have strong moral codes. Many pupils set a strong example of tolerance and respect transcending historical differences. However, pupils from both the Greek and Turkish speaking communities express concern about prejudice shown towards other nationalities by a small minority of their peers. A majority of pupils said that the school does not listen to their views, but the inspection showed there were many ways in which views are sought. The majority of pupils said that teachers treated pupils unequally, and that they were unfair in the award of rewards and sanctions. The inspection team found that there is no centralised record to monitor inconsistencies. Arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils do not include a safeguarding policy and appropriate checks on governors. The school buildings are poorly decorated and maintained; a number of points were brought to the school's attention.
- 2.3 The quality of governance, leadership and management is satisfactory. Frequent recent changes in the leadership of the school have resulted in the board of management involving itself in detail, and consequently negating its ability to oversee the quality of education and implementation of policies, including safeguarding. The lack of a formal complaints procedure for parents has led to confusion of role and resulted in a small minority of parents in the questionnaire reporting that the school had not handled complaints well. A minority of parents did not agree that the school was well governed. The academic leadership has relied on the excellent learning attitudes of pupils to achieve their excellent academic results, rather than seeking to improve the overall good quality of teaching through a school wide appraisal scheme. The pastoral leaders have not taken sufficiently-firm action in confronting some key issues of behaviour.

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 does not meet all the requirements of the Standards for British Schools Overseas, and to do so it should:

- provide personal, social and health education in all year groups [Standard 1.9, under Curriculum];
- implement appropriate safeguarding arrangements [Standard 3.2, under Welfare, health and safety];
- undertake checks on the chair and members of the board in line with those undertaken for staff [Standards 4.5 and 4.6, under Suitability of proprietor and staff];
- improve identified shortcomings in the site and premises identified during the inspection [Standard 5.4, under Premises and accommodation];
- improve the standard of maintenance and decoration [Standard 5.18, under Premises and accommodation];
- draw up and implement a suitable complaints procedure and make it available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils [Standard 6.10, under The provision of information; and Standards 7.1 to 7.11 under Complaints];
- ensure the board provide and review appropriate safeguarding policies. Standard 9.3, under Leadership];
- identify priorities for improvement and implement decisions effectively [Standard 9.4, under Leadership];
- provide regular staff appraisal or development reviews [Standard 9.5, under Leadership].

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 In addition to the above action points related to the Standards requirements the school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure that the features of excellent teaching are recognised and implemented by all staff.
2. Ensure that pastoral approaches are vigorous in confronting and eradicating intolerant behaviour.
3. Clearly define leadership and management roles to identify the responsibility for the monitoring and development of key academic and pastoral areas.
4. Introduce terms of reference, an annual cycle of review and code of conduct for the board of management that enables its members to concentrate on overseeing the quality of education and the performance of senior leaders.

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 learning is excellent. Pupils are very well educated, in accordance with the school's aim to promote academic excellence through high quality learning. Pupils show excellent levels of subject knowledge. They are confident and articulate in conversation. Almost all pupils are native Greek or Turkish speakers, but in class they express themselves clearly in accurate English. They have highly developed levels of reading and writing, and they show a mature appreciation of poetry. Pupils develop strong listening skills through native language teaching, and they demonstrate high levels of logical thought and analytical expertise, particularly in mathematics classes. They are exceptionally numerate. Many of them are inquisitive and research independently if required in the examination courses. Excellent creative abilities are evident in the pupils' musical performances and in design and technology, where they use information and communication technology (ICT) with confidence. Pupils participate enthusiastically in physical education (PE) and games lessons, achieving high levels of fitness.
- 3.2 Pupils are very successful in both the Cypriot and international mathematical Olympiads. Debating is popular and pupils have been finalists and winners in the worldwide debating and public speaking competitions. Others have been elected to the European Youth Parliament. In a UNESCO competition the school received an award as a "school against racism". Pupils regularly achieve the highest international mark across a wide range of subjects in A-level and IGCSE examinations, including mathematics, Greek, Turkish and art. In recent years, pupils have gained first prizes in national geographical and creative writing competitions. Several pupils participate in the state youth orchestra and represented Cyprus in the Eurovision song contests. School sports teams are highly successful in athletics, basketball and cross-country running. Boys' and girls' teams respectively have won the national football and futsal tournaments.
- 3.3 The following analysis uses the English national data for the years 2012 to 2014. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in GCSE have been above the UK national average for maintained schools. Results have shown improvement between 2012 and 2014, with results in 2014 being similar to the UK national average for maintained selective schools. Girls' results in 2014 were above the UK average for girls in maintained selective schools. Results in IGCSE have been higher than worldwide averages in all subjects. When compared against UK schools that enter pupils for the A level, results are usually at least in line with, and in many subjects above, the UK norms. Although all pupils sit IGCSE mathematics one year early, the vast majority achieve A* grades. In 2012 to 2014, A-level results were above the UK national average for maintained selective schools. In 2015 the large majority of pupils' entries were awarded A* or A grades. Almost all pupils secure places at their first choice university in the United Kingdom and overseas, many with very high entry requirements.
- 3.4 These levels of attainment show that pupils make good progress throughout the school, as seen in lessons and work scrutiny, and in evidence from standardised measures of progress in Years 10 and 11, and in the sixth form. The most rapid progress is made by pupils in the middle band of ability. The lack of systematic screening of ability at entry means that the school does not identify, in a systematic

manner, individuals who have SEND or who are more able. As a result, it is not possible to judge their progress as individuals. In the questionnaires the very large majority of both parents and pupils said they were pleased with the progress being made.

- 3.5 Pupils are outstanding learners. Their ambition is at the core of their academic success. Some take extra classes after school to reinforce the considerable progress they make in lessons. They are extremely motivated and keen to learn, generating a substantial volume of work. They approach their studies seriously, settling quickly in lessons and work with concentration and enthusiasm. They take pride in the presentation of their work and the written explanation of solutions to mathematics problems is particularly strong. They enjoy opportunities for independent learning in projects and presentations. When given the opportunity they collaborate effectively with others; for example in a Year 13 physics practical on simple harmonic motion and a Year 13 Turkish lesson in which pupils in groups debated nuclear power. In curriculum discussions, they respect the views of others and form good relationships with their teachers, which underpins significantly the quality of their subject knowledge and their progress.

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

- 3.6 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good. The curriculum supports the school's aim to promote academic excellence and to maximise an individual's potential by providing rich and engaging educational experiences and challenges. It provides well for pupils of all ages and most abilities, including the many who have strong mathematical skills.
- 3.7 Pupils study a broad range of subjects that cover the requisite areas of learning. In Year 7 pupils are taught in groups determined by whether their first language is English, Turkish or Greek. The arrangement succeeds in developing pupils into fluent bilingual learners early in their career and supports their later academic progress. In Year 8, pupils are mixed together into multilingual teaching groups and French is introduced as a third language. Mathematics, languages, science and humanities have high profiles, but the time spent studying creative subjects is constricted.
- 3.8 Pupils are offered 23 subjects at IGCSE. English, mathematics, science, a humanity and either Greek or Turkish are compulsory. Although for many it is not their native language, all pupils take First Language English language and English literature IGCSEs. The curriculum for pupils in Years 12 and 13 is in the process of change. Those in Year 13 have studied four subjects to AS level, and are studying three to A level, in addition to mandatory examination in either Greek or Turkish. Almost all pupils study mathematics. The opportunity to study a native language enrichment programme supports those applying for more specialised courses or careers. In the questionnaires a large majority of parents expressed satisfaction with the range of subjects provided.
- 3.9 In most respects, the quality of the curriculum supports pupils' excellent learning attitudes and their academic achievement. In the questionnaire, a small minority of parents said they were not satisfied with the school's provision for special educational needs and for gifted and talented pupils. Inspectors agree with this view, finding that the school has no systematic way of identifying either the more able pupils, or those who have SEND. Nor are those who have particular gifts and

talents identified. As a result, there is no certainty that the needs of these pupils are being met.

- 3.10 The citizenship/PSHE programme in Years 7 to 9, and the Global Perspectives IGCSE option, both make very positive contributions to pupils' awareness of current world issues, such as relationships, identity and the environment. The lack of citizenship/PSHE lessons beyond Year 9 limits discussion of personal and health issues to opportunities in short tutor sessions.
- 3.11 The contribution of extra-curricular activities is excellent. It meets the school's mission to maximise individual potential by providing rich and engaging educational experiences and challenges. The range of extra-curricular activities is very broad and ensures that all pupils are able to extend their interests and talents outside the classroom. Pupils have opportunities to enrich their skills by debating in different languages, dance and play sport, and taking part in choirs and orchestras and creative writing. Many take part in the Model United Nations (MUN) programme and represent the school at international events, which develops them personally. The many overseas trips cultivate pupils' awareness of world issues. The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award has been re-introduced internally and is proving popular. The extra-curricular programme also provides opportunities for pupils to propose their own activities and take up a variety of leadership roles by planning, organising and supervising younger pupils. The annual talent night is planned co-operatively by pupils and teachers. However, the absence of a central overview of the school's extra-curricular programme results in a lack of both the monitoring of its quality and its development.
- 3.12 The range of charities supported by the school is wide and many charity events are organised by the pupils. Links with the community are strong and pupils take pride in helping less fortunate members of their community in many ways, including fundraising for children. The school's "We Care, We Help" club has also been recognised for its charity activities with a national award.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.13 The quality of teaching is good. It enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make progress, in keeping with the school's aim to encourage and prepare pupils to access the highest quality tertiary education.
- 3.14 Teachers are very well qualified in their curriculum areas. Subject knowledge is communicated effectively to pupils, whose excellent learning attitudes ensure that factual detail is effectively absorbed. Planning of lessons reflects this objective. Although many classes are late in starting, once begun the remaining time is well managed. Electronic presentations and work books maintain pupils' concentration and focus on reinforcing knowledge. The content of lessons is reserved to the examination requirements of each subject. Pupils react positively to teaching approaches that concentrate predominately on transmitting information, even when the range of methods used is restricted. Pupils demonstrate high levels of respect for their teachers and relationships are excellent. In the questionnaire a large majority of pupils said that teachers help them to learn. The strong aspects of the teaching supports pupils' excellent academic achievement.
- 3.15 In the large majority of lessons, teaching sets high expectations and clear goals. The most effective approaches include questions and tasks that monitor the pupils' depth of understanding as well as knowledge, and use the results flexibly to modify lesson plans. They use a range of techniques using their perception of pupils' differing needs and styles of learning. The lack of a systematic approach at whole-school level to identifying pupils with particular needs means that teaching cannot be sure of providing for them appropriately. Much teaching was seen that inspired pupils' enthusiasm to research and pursue their own interests outside the examination specifications.
- 3.16 Learning resources of good quality are integrated into teaching, for example in science and technology. Information and communication technology is used successfully in some lessons to stimulate interest and encourage independence, for example in an architectural project in design and technology and an investigation into the First World War.
- 3.17 The few instances of less effective teaching do not distinguish between differing abilities and learning approaches in class. Teachers do not assess whether pupils have grasped concepts and do not divert from lesson plans. There is an over-reliance on lecturing, and occasionally pupils are expected to make notes without guidance. As a result, the more able pupils become disengaged, and their progress is constrained. In the younger years, this can lead to low-level disruption which has a negative impact on other students' learning. Pupils requiring additional help may attend the many after school sessions offered, especially in mathematics and the sciences. In some lessons, contrary to school policy, the use of the Greek language negates the progress of non-Greek speakers.
- 3.18 Frequent testing provides the opportunity to assess pupils' mastery of subject content, but is not used to set individual targets or to measure progress towards them. Homework tasks are well linked to class work, and ensure that pupils' skills in applying knowledge are reinforced. Many lessons begin with a review of homework, and teachers can trust pupils to disclose their mistakes. Pupils' workbooks and homework are not regularly marked by teachers, who therefore cannot identify problems with learning which could influence subsequent lesson planning. Very few pieces of pupils' work include the guidelines for improvement to help improve their progress.

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 good. In many ways, it successfully reflects the school's objective of educating pupils to develop trust, mutual respect and an understanding of each other's culture, ethnicity, religion, gender and individual needs. A significant and unique feature of the school is the co-existence of pupils from both the Greek and Turkish speaking communities. The behaviour and attitudes of the vast majority of pupils remain faithful to the principles of the founder against a backcloth of historical tension. Within this context, most pupils feel valued and happy, and they express their contentment with the school. They are courteous, motivated and enthusiastic. They generally make friends easily and value the contribution of both staff and fellow pupils.
- 4.2 Many pupils are spiritually mature and appreciate the value of non-material aspects of life. Pupils are not overt in their religious belief but, in conversation, many say that it contributes greatly to their lives. They gain a strong sense of spirituality from either Greek Orthodox religious education classes or those of other world religions. Amongst the overwhelming majority of pupils there is a strong tolerance and empathy for those of other faiths. In class they reacted positively to ethereal experiences, for example the use of John Lennon's "Imagine" to reflect on the Paris terrorist attacks.
- 4.3 The quality of the moral development of the overwhelming majority of pupils is excellent. They enthusiastically seize the opportunities in the important citizenship and the global perspectives programme to explore and discuss such topics as drug abuse, human rights and the holocaust. They are informed and balanced in their discussions. The overwhelming majority know the difference between right and wrong, and they appreciate the example shown by staff. Pupils passionately debate their views and are receptive to the arguments of others. In discussion almost all pupils are critical of the small minority who exasperate the community by dropping excessive litter and painting partisan graffiti on the site. Furthermore, they express frustration that senior leaders have not more effectively addressed the problem.
- 4.4 The quality of the pupils' social development is excellent. The pupils enjoy and appreciate their school and working with their fellow pupils. Boys and girls mix freely and work collaboratively in classes, sports teams and clubs. They show high levels of consideration, politeness and care for others. The behaviour of the pupils in classes and around the school is very good. When given the opportunity, they enjoy collaborative learning, confidently question and argue cogently. Pupils welcome the possibility to work for their peers, taking on roles ranging from class monitor in the early years to organising an international MUN day. They develop self-esteem and self-confidence as they progress through the school, as was observed in many classes. They organise and contribute to a wide range of charities, including those for recent refugees.
- 4.5 The quality of the pupils' cultural development is framed by the island's history. The pupils have a strong awareness of the events of the last half century, and many are a model of reconciliation. They set a strong example to all in the community that tolerance and respect should transcend historical differences. In discussions, pupils from both the Greek and Turkish speaking communities expressed concern about the intolerance shown towards other nationalities by a very small minority of pupils. The election of a Turkish-speaking head boy is a signal that only a very few hold these extreme views.

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

- 4.6 The contribution of arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is good. The school's pastoral system is successful in supporting the personal development of almost all pupils, and supporting the positive attitudes that underpin their excellent academic progress.
- 4.7 The school has effective structures in place to offer support and guidance to pupils. The pastoral team, consisting of form tutors, heads of year and pastoral assistant heads, liaises to ensure that pupils' academic progress, personal development and welfare is monitored. Staff communicate concerns with heads of year through intervention reports, and departments are given summaries of these concerns. Comprehensive guidance is available in Year 9, helping students make IGCSE option choices appropriate to their skills, and in Years 12 and 13, the advice team successfully supports pupils in gaining entry into highly competitive universities across the world.
- 4.8 Personal development in Years 7 to 9 is enhanced through the PHSE programme, covering a limited range of topics and, in older years, by courses in global perspectives and citizenship. School assemblies support personal development by allowing pupils to gain practical knowledge and skills to help them deal with many of the issues they face as they approach adulthood.
- 4.9 Relationships among pupils and between staff and pupils are generally good, but marred by pockets of racial bullying between pupils. In the questionnaires and in discussions, teachers and pupils reported that any latent tensions were exacerbated by the occasional use of the Greek language in teaching. In the questionnaire a majority of pupils said that staff did not treat them all equally. A minority of pupils said that the school did not deal with bullying, but an inspection of records by inspectors shows that the school has responded vigorously to individual incidents. They found that the published anti-bullying policy outlines the responsibilities of pupils, staff and parents, but preventative measures are not given enough priority by pastoral leaders, and sanctions for bullying are not specified. A code of conduct exists for pupils, but pupils report that it is rarely enforced in this area. Good behaviour elsewhere is promoted through the behaviour and achievement points system, where various misdemeanours, or commendable actions, are awarded points according to a published tariff. This process is inconsistently applied, causing some resentment amongst some pupils, who also felt the tariffs to be arbitrary.
- 4.10 The necessity of eating healthily is discussed in biology, and the level of physical fitness is excellent. There is a well-equipped health centre where good care is available from the school nurse, but records are not adequately kept. Admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and stored, and a focus on reducing pupil lateness has improved significantly.
- 4.11 Recruitment procedures have regard to official guidance in the context of the school. New members of staff are checked appropriately and records kept. There is no child protection training, but staff know the procedures to be followed if pupils are at risk or in need. The board of management is committed to improving the safety of pupils. An external health and safety assessment has highlighted urgent improvements to be made in fire evacuation procedures and limiting danger from traffic flow at the start and end of the school day. Access for those with disabilities on the uneven site has been suitably addressed. The school responded positively to premises and site matters identified by the inspectors.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is satisfactory. The governors, known as the board of management, commit considerable time to advancing the already high standards of education in the school. Expertise in finance, architecture and business is well represented. However, the board lacks experience in other key areas, especially education. Members have no fixed term of office, and there are no systems to evaluate the board's own performance as a governing body. Board members are not checked for their suitability with regard to safeguarding, yet have unchallenged access to the site and pupils.
- 5.2 The board has worked closely with the head to ensure that through the economic challenges of the region the school has remained secure. It has worked with external consultants to produce a five-year strategy that will give focus to developing the pupils' opportunities and upgrade the quality of the environment. Financial planning is excellent. Resources have been made available to further improve the already good quality of teaching, and hence enhance pupils' achievement. The board has secured investment to upgrade the buildings, many of which are not well decorated and maintained. The board works effectively to balance the demands of a school that is both independent yet enshrined in national law, but it has no clear terms of reference. Meetings are not planned in an annual cycle of activity. As a result there is lack of strategic oversight of key policies, particularly those involving safeguarding. The effective implementation of policies by the senior leadership team is not formally reviewed.
- 5.3 The absence of clear guidance results in board members being involved in areas more usually left to educational professionals. The majority of board members are parents of current pupils, and conflicts of interest are not declared in minutes. There are no processes to keep the board properly informed, which limits their objectivity and ability to remain impartial in dealing with unresolved parental concerns. The absence of a transparent complaints procedure causes confusion in communication, and obstructs the rational and quick solution that would benefit pupils. Further, the ease with which parents can draw board members into detailed areas of school life reduces their status as governors. In the questionnaires a minority of parents said that they felt the school was not well governed.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.4 The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The recent frequent and multiple changes in the senior leadership of the school has resulted in a lack of clear direction in many areas of school life. The board of management has been drawn into discussions on curricular and pastoral matters, and its role and that of senior leaders has lacked delineation. Consequently, progress in addressing issues has either stagnated or subject departments have taken independent initiatives, leading to inconsistencies of practice. In the questionnaire, a small minority of parents said they thought the school has not been well managed. At present the responsibilities for organising and overseeing appraisal of teachers, staff training and development, the use of data for assessment, pastoral issues and extra-curricular activity are insufficiently delineated. The leadership has now identified areas for improvement in the already good quality of teaching, in the quality of pastoral care and in the management structure needed to oversee changes.

- 5.5 The quality of middle management lacks consistency, and this is seen in the variability of teaching quality. Some heads of department have introduced schemes to ensure that approaches that challenge and stimulate the more able are shared between staff, but there has been no co-ordinated and sustained action by those responsible for the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Appraisal and the consequent staff development of teachers is managed by individual departments, again leading to inconsistency. Appraisal includes observation of the quality of teaching in lessons, but the benchmarks are inconsistent and rarely focus on the impact of teaching in developing pupils' skills as well as their subject knowledge. In some departments there is no appraisal. In the last year the absence of a structured staff development programme has resulted in uncoordinated departmental approaches. The induction for new teachers is provided by heads of department and hence its effectiveness is inconsistent.
- 5.6 The school has started to compare the ability of pupils entering Year 10 with those of similar age in the United Kingdom. However, the data is not analysed in any depth. Teachers have no information with which to identify the potential of individual pupils and to monitor their progress. Although the progress between Year 10 and GCSE in different subjects is analysed, there is no scrutiny of different groups. Pupils with SEND are detected ad hoc in class, and teachers have received no advice about the provision they need. Some academic departments have marking policies which provide guidelines to help pupils improve. However, the lack of a whole school approach results in some written work being left unmarked or checked.
- 5.7 The management of the curriculum is effective overall, but heads of department do not directly contribute to its development. Some heads of department teach only A level, and there are no mechanisms for them to monitor the effectiveness of the curriculum in their subjects. No senior manager takes charge of the allocation of teaching resources, which as a result are unevenly distributed.
- 5.8 Pastoral leaders have not consistently addressed the very few cases of bullying and the school has not confronted the pupils' perception of the majority of the pupils in the questionnaire that teachers do not treat them equally. The rewards and sanctions policy is not centrally monitored and results in teachers and departments rewarding or punishing pupils in different ways for the same standard of work or behaviour. In the questionnaire the majority of pupils thought they were awarded unfairly. Pastoral leaders have an excellent knowledge of pupils but the lack of a safeguarding policy leads to insecurity in the monitoring or oversight of pupils at risk or in need.

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

- 5.9 The school works hard to maintain good relationships with parents. The website and parent portal provide up-to-date information about activities and individual pupils. Parents can check their child's attendance and behaviour records, monitor homework tasks and view timetables. Parents are provided with detailed information about their children's progress in annual parent-teacher consultations and in termly reports. These reports give general advice, but lack specific targets or guidelines for improvement. Parents share their children's strong academic ambitions, and recognise the success that the school achieves. In discussion they expressed strong support for the inspection process and its signal of a new culture of self-evaluation and improvement.
- 5.10 In the questionnaires a minority of parents disagreed that the school encourages them to be involved in the life of the school. During the inspection week many parents were observed in school talking to teachers, and time for individual discussions is protected. The English School's Parents' Association is formally recognised, and consulted regularly on many aspects of school life. It arranges wide range of informal events to welcome new and current parents.
- 5.11 Almost all the information required by regulation is made available on the school website for the parents of both current and prospective pupils. The school has no safeguarding policy or a formal complaints procedure for parents. In the questionnaires a small minority of parents said the school had not handled their concerns sufficiently well. Parents have direct electronic access to teachers, but informally register concerns through the English School's Parents' Association. Concerns are passed to the school anonymously which prevents thorough investigation. Occasionally parents contact governors directly which entrenches discussion and compromises the governors' independence in monitoring the fairness of the processes.

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 and other members of the board of management, members of the school's official parents' group, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and concerts. 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

Mr Stephen Cole	Reporting Inspector
Dr Nicholas England	Assistant Reporting Inspector (Former Head, HMC)
Mrs Olivia Boyer	Senior Team Inspector (Former Head of Dept, HMC)
Mr Stephen Gray	Senior Team Inspector (Former Director of Studies, HMC)
Mr Malcolm Hebden	Senior Team Inspector (Head of Dept, COBIS)
Mrs Karen Jamieson	Senior Team Inspector (Former Acting Head, COBIS)
Miss Helen Johnson	Senior Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, HMC)
Ms Mareve Kilbride-Newman	Senior Team Inspector (Former Head, COBIS)
Mr Alex Klaiss	Senior Team Inspector (Acting Head, COBIS)
Mr Ian Mitchell	Senior Team Inspector (Head of Dept, HMC)
Mr Ian Raybould	Senior Team Inspector (Head, IAPS)
Mr Kevin Riley	Senior Team Inspector (Head, HMC)