



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

British Schools Overseas

Inspection Report

Cambridge School Bucharest

May 2022

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School's Details

School	Cambridge School of Bucharest			
Address	Strada Erou Iancu Nicolae Nr. 126 C Voluntari Ilfov 077190 Romania			
Telephone number	40 21 210 2131/38			
Email address	office@cambridgeschool.ro			
Director	Mrs Rita Hayek Maalouf			
Chair of governing body	Mr Joseph Khoury			
Age range	3 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	847			
	EYFS and Kindergarten	122	Primary	306
	Secondary	324	Sixth Form	95
Inspection dates	23 to 26 May 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 The Cambridge School of Bucharest is a co-educational school for pupils from Nursery to Year 13. It first opened in 1994 in the centre of the city, and has been owned by the Mateas Foundation since 2016, and the three members of the foundation, together with the director and director of development, act as the governing body. The school moved in 2018 to a new purpose-built site bordering the Baneasa forest in northern Bucharest that is planned to cater for an expansion to 1400 pupils. Currently Nursery to Year 4 pupils, which includes those in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), and Year 5 to Year 13 pupils are taught in separate buildings on the campus but share recreational and sporting areas. The director is the overall head but there are individual heads of the four sections. Since the previous inspection, the school has changed from a hybrid curriculum to one modelled on the UK national curriculum. In parallel, there has been a large increase in the proportion of teaching staff who are native English speaking.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school seeks to promote the well-being of its pupils and the strength of its community and measures its success by those outcomes. The school aims to support, challenge, and encourage pupils as they pursue their passions, develop their confidence, create their success, and invest in their community.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils represent over 40 different nationalities. Approximately two-thirds are Romanian passport holders, with sizeable minorities of Chinese, Turkish, and Arabic native speakers present in the pupil body. Typically, the children come from families where parents are working professionals who wish their children to have a high-quality education and to be fluent in English. Nearly one-third of pupils joined the school at the start of the current academic year.
- 1.4 Recent data provided by the school show that the ability of pupils in Years 7 to 11 is normally distributed around the average for pupils taking the same tests worldwide. No data is available for other year groups but inspectors judged their ability to be similar. Ten pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and they receive specialised support from the school though some residual cultural resistance to identifying pupils who might need extra support means that the number of pupils is likely to be much higher. Almost all pupils speak English alongside one or more native languages, and just over 50 regularly receive intensive English support. Just under three-quarters of pupils sit first language English IGCSE examinations. The school aims to support those it has identified as most able, gifted and talented (MAGT) in lessons.

2. Inspection of Standards for British Schools Overseas

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is a body approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting independent schools in England and overseas.

Inspections for British schools overseas follow closely the framework and guidance for independent school inspection in England. ISI reports to the English Department for Education (DfE) on the extent to which schools meet the Standards for British Schools Overseas (BSO). It also takes account, where relevant, of compliance with any local requirements. Schools may opt for an inspection of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE.

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: an exhaustive health and safety audit; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures; an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment or company law; in-depth consideration of the extent to which the school meets the requirements of local law and custom.

This is a COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY, the report of which appears later in this document. The COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the Standards for British Schools Overseas. The standards represent minimum requirements, and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. In order to gain BSO accreditation, a school is required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report. If a school does not meet all of the standards, it may elect to be re-inspected once it has taken the required actions in order to gain BSO accreditation.

Headline judgements against the Standards for British Schools Overseas indicate that the standards have been 'met' or 'not met' for accreditation.

Accreditation as a British school overseas lasts for three years. The school's previous inspection was in November 2018.

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets all the Standards for British Schools Overseas and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

Part 1 – Quality of education provided

2.2 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.

- 2.3 The curriculum in the EYFS, primary, and secondary schools is well planned and takes account of the ages, aptitudes and needs of pupils. It provides pupils with experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education; enables them to acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills and a good understanding of English; provides personal, social, health and economic education, up-to-date careers guidance, and appropriate programmes of activities for all pupils. The curriculum is delivered in English, and pupils have the opportunity to study their native language to IGCSE. Romanian nationals study their country's history during Romanian language lessons. The curriculum provides all pupils, including those with SEND, with the opportunity to learn and make progress and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British, Romanian, and western society.
- 2.4 Teaching is well planned. It shows a good understanding of the pupils and their needs; good subject knowledge and understanding; appropriate use of resources; and effective strategies for managing behaviour. It is successful in giving pupils the opportunity to acquire new knowledge and make good progress and it fosters self-motivation, application and interest. It does not undermine fundamental British values and does not discriminate against pupils because of their protected characteristics. There are frameworks throughout the school to assess pupils' performance by reference to the school's aims or British national norms, and assessment information is used to plan teaching so that pupils can progress.
- 2.5 Section 3 of this report provides a more detailed evaluation of the quality of the pupils' learning and achievements and the contribution that the curriculum and teaching make to these outcomes.

Part 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

2.6 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.

- 2.7 The school promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. It promotes principles which enable pupils to develop self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence; distinguish right from wrong; accept responsibility for their behaviour; contribute to the lives of others; and gain knowledge and respect for public institutions in England and for the responsibilities of Romanian citizenship. Further, it encourages tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions and promotes a balanced presentation of political issues and preclusion of partisan political views. It promotes respect for the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- 2.8 Section 3 of this report provides a more detailed evaluation of the quality of the pupils' personal development and the factors which contribute to their development.

Part 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

2.9 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16] are met.

- 2.10 Suitable arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school. These are in line with Romanian guidelines and have regard to relevant statutory guidance published in the

UK. Strategies are implemented effectively to ensure that pupils of all ages are listened to and provided with early help. The particular vulnerability of those with SEND is recognised. Staff are suitably aware of the code of conduct and the whistleblowing policy. An appropriate policy regarding low-level concerns has been recently introduced. Safeguarding is effectively managed, and communication between the school and external professionals promotes the well-being of pupils at risk or in danger of harm. Pupils have a secure awareness of how to keep safe on line.

- 2.11 Good behaviour is promoted, and the system of rewards and sanctions is clearly understood and effective. Bullying prevented as far as is reasonably practical. The school complies with the relevant Romanian health and safety laws and fire safety standards. Documentation in these areas is thorough and shows an effective overview of procedures. Pupils are properly supervised, and attendance and admissions procedures ensure that the school can find the whereabouts of pupils. Access to and from the site is rigorously monitored and recorded. The risk to pupils attached to any activity is appropriately assessed and recorded. First aid is administered in a timely manner.

Part 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.12 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

- 2.13 The suitability of persons appointed as members of staff is checked in line with both national requirements and guidance issued to schools in the UK. Appropriate checks are made on staff working as contractors, volunteers and others who have access to the site. Members of the governing body are checked to an appropriate level. A comprehensive and accurate register is maintained of the recruitment checks undertaken.

Part 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.14 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

- 2.15 Suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided, including those for disabled pupils. Two medical rooms provide appropriate accommodation to cater for the medical and therapy needs of all pupils. Premises and accommodation are maintained to a standard so that the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured. The acoustic conditions and lighting are suitable: external lighting ensures that pupils can enter and leave the school premises safely. The provision of water for drinking and washing is suitable, and sufficient outdoor space on the school site is provided for physical education and play.

Part 6 – Provision of information

- 2.16 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.**

- 2.17 The contact details for the school, the director, heads of school, the president of the governing body, and a statement of the school's ethos are provided for parents of pupils and prospective pupils on the school website. Policies and particulars of arrangements for admissions, misbehaviour and exclusions; provision for SEND and those with English as an additional language (EAL); handling complaints; the curriculum; promoting good behaviour; preventing bullying; health and safety; and first aid are made available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils on the school website together with details of the school's academic performance. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are published on the school website. The school provides an annual written report to parents of each pupil's progress and attainment.

Part 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

- 2.18 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.**

- 2.19 The school's complaints procedure is available on the school website. It provides for concerns and complaints to be considered on an informal basis; for the establishment of a formal procedure for a complaint to be made in writing; for a hearing before a panel which includes an independent member, at which it allows for the parent to be accompanied; for the panel to make findings and recommendations; and for a confidential record to be kept of findings.

Part 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.20 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

- 2.21 The leadership and management of the school, including the members of the governing body, demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities so that the BSO Standards are met consistently. The school's day-to-day leadership, its oversight by the governing body and their decisions, actively promote the well-being of pupils.
- 2.22 Section 3 of this report provides a more detailed evaluation of the impact of leadership and management on the pupils' learning, achievement and personal development.

3. Inspection of Educational Quality

Preface

In addition to evaluating whether or not the school met all of the Standards for British Schools Overseas, this inspection evaluated the **quality** of the school's work, focusing on the two key outcomes for pupils:

- the quality of the pupils' learning and achievement;
- the quality of the pupils' personal development;

Headline judgements of educational quality include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'. In addition, the text identifies clearly the impact of the curriculum, teaching, pastoral care, leadership and management on outcomes for pupils.

As ISI inspections of British schools overseas are for the benefit of the pupils, inspections aim to:

- 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;
- help schools to improve the quality and effectiveness of pupils' education.

The report refers to year groups in accordance with the system most commonly used in England.

Key findings.

3.1 The quality of the pupils' learning and achievement is good.

3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is good.

Recommendations

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements:

- Enhance the progress and subsequent attainment of pupils further by ensuring that the planning of all lessons fully takes into account the ability, age and needs of all pupils.
- Improve pupils' learning by giving pupils of all ages more opportunities to enhance leadership in their own classroom learning, to match the experiences of sixth-form pupils.
- Enable pupils of all ages to develop their physical skills further.
- Draw on pupils' strong moral awareness to increase pupils' involvement in promoting good behaviour in a review of the current arrangements.
- Expand pupils' engagement with and influence on the life of the school and in the local community.

The quality of the pupils' learning and achievement

3.4 The quality of the pupils' learning and achievement is good.

3.5 Pupils of all ages have good knowledge, skills and understanding in almost all areas of learning, and show consistent development between the start of Nursery and when they leave the school at the end of Year 11 or Year 13. Over the past three years, pupils have achieved top grades in roughly half of their IGCSE examinations, just above the averages for those taking the same examinations

worldwide. The school has only recently introduced systems to identify, using such performance data, how far individual pupils are achieving their academic potential. These data suggest that these results indicate that pupils achieve better than expectations for their ability. This correlates with an analysis of pupils' work. In the questionnaires, almost all pupils agreed that the school gives them the opportunity to learn and make good progress. Throughout the school, progress is good. It is sometimes constrained by a lack of planning for different abilities and needs. This confirms responses in the questionnaires where a few parents did not feel that their child's needs were met effectively. Almost all pupils achieve high A-level grades, enabling them to enter universities in the UK and Western Europe which have demanding entrance requirements. In discussion, sixth-form pupils praised the high quality of advice on university entry they had received.

- 3.6 Children in the EYFS predict and make reasoned judgements successfully in both lessons and play. The youngest children showed inspectors highly effective planned, executed and recorded results of a floating and sinking experiment. By the end of Year 6, pupils formalise their methods, for example changing wingspan to vary the drop time of paper helicopters. Secondary pupils exhibit good knowledge of science, and in lessons many relate this to everyday experience, for example when investigating the frequency and amplitude of musical sounds. Their progress is stalled in some lessons when their interventions are deflected, or they are asked to copy notes or diagrams.
- 3.7 Pupils of all ages have sound technological skills, evident in their work using textiles and cardboard. The school's leadership has already identified this as an area to develop, and a new building underway includes a design and technology area. The level of pupils' information, communication and technology (ICT) skills depend on their own interest and experience, particularly below Year 7. All secondary pupils study computer science within their curriculum in Year 7 to 9 and it is a popular IGCSE option. In lessons observed beyond the ICT suite, pupils used software only to access homework activities and teaching resources. In discussions with pupils, they described how they would value to opportunity to integrate the use of ICT more into their learning at school.
- 3.8 Pupils of all ages develop a good knowledge of the human and social curriculum, particularly when subject content reflects their own interests. Primary pupils produced well-researched presentations on Norway and have a good geographical awareness. Pupils show excellent historical knowledge in their written work and nearly a half of IGCSE grades are A* or A.
- 3.9 Pupils have good creative ability. The youngest children in EYFS handle brushes and other resources with controlled dexterity to express their creativity through painting, supported by an approach that allows children to work independently. They showed an excellent understanding of colour mixing to blend various shades of red, orange and yellow to create an African sunset. Secondary pupils produce a good standard of art, despite the currently limited space for teaching and storage. The school's leadership has already integrated into plans for the new building a designated art area. Pupils develop a competent mastery of basic portraiture and perspective in Year 7, and many become proficient users of different media, including textiles, by the end of Year 9. Older pupils are confident to experiment with the skills they have learnt, developing, for example, high-quality finished pieces based on the work of Armit Rainer. In music, lower secondary pupils used software to mix sound and create a range of performances that reflect their strong inventive skills.
- 3.10 The youngest pupils develop their gross motor skills in a controlled way, but their ability to, for example, balance or throw is below that expected for their age. They enjoy running but are reticent in other physical activity. Secondary pupils made limited progress during physical education (PE) lessons, often spending time waiting their turn. The relative weakness of PE is another example of an area for development that the school's leadership has already identified and addressed. This supports the view of the very large majority of parents in questionnaires that the school is governed and managed well. Pupils who have strong athletic aptitude enjoy wide ranging success. Individuals and teams of both male and female pupils regularly win regional, national and occasionally European age group competitions in *inter alia* basketball, soccer and athletics. Others take part in physically demanding expeditions. In the questionnaires, the overwhelming majority of pupils said they could

take part in a range of activities outside lessons, and in discussion recognise that the school is starting to provide more external trips as the impact of the pandemic decreases.

- 3.11 The high quality of pupils' communication skills is one of their strengths. Almost all parents responding to the questionnaire said they were pleased with their child' progress in English. In the EYFS, children confidently and expressively retold the story of *The Hungry Caterpillar* with accurate association of pictures and words. In discussions they described clearly what they had been doing through the morning and they listen attentively to their friends in play and more formal settings such as circle time. Primary pupils express their opinions freely and clearly and become increasingly fluent. Pupils with SEND, and those who need extra support with their English, benefit from structured intensive lessons, and their articulation quickly improves. Pupils of this age listen well but sometimes disengage in lessons when instructions are unclear. The writing of primary pupils is accurately formed and consistently spaced, and they read with accuracy and good comprehension, determining meaning from context, for example 'an elephant's creased skin'. They are able to explain clearly the difference between conditional, subordinate and relative clauses.
- 3.12 Secondary pupils show excellent skills in speaking, reading, writing, and listening. The skills are especially well developed in English lessons where pupils articulate their own arguments, for example about role models in *Romeo and Juliet*, and debate at length. Secondary pupils develop a thirst for reading. Pupils' work included highly imaginative responses to books they have read, such as *Harry Potter*. In all lessons pupils are keen to find the exact meanings of words for example advanced words such as 'sequester', 'propensity', 'prudent' and 'flair' in a Year 7 study of Washington Irving's *The Headless Horseman*. The mastery of vocabulary is exceptional for pupils who are in the main, speaking in their second or third language. Most pupils enter the school speaking only a small amount of English, and they quickly develop from a mastery of spoken English as a second language early in the primary school, to being confident speakers in two or more languages as they enter the secondary school. Nearly a half of IGCSE candidates achieve an A* or A grade in English. This high level of skill has been underpinned by the leadership's recent appointments of more native English-speaking teachers. There are many examples of lengthy drafts of argumentative and descriptive writing, and a good response to teachers' comments. Many secondary pupils achieve highly in external essay competitions.
- 3.13 Pupils display good mathematical skills. They are able to transfer numeracy skills, for example, when Nursery children instigated a countdown from ten to zero while pretending a garden tepee was a rocket. Pupils show a logical approach to mathematics and apply it in other areas. At all ages pupils' progress is limited by teaching which rarely provides individuals or groups of pupils, and in particular the most able, with suitably demanding mathematical challenges. Across the curriculum and ages, provision for the most able defaults to extra activities of a similar level of demand, rather than intellectual challenge being consistently provided for in lesson planning. This supports the view of almost a quarter of pupils in questionnaires who stated that most lessons were not challenging or interesting. The school's leadership has already taken action to remedy the issue.
- 3.14 Pupils throughout the primary school have good study skills and sometimes there is evidence of excellent approaches to learning. In Reception, children made good use of mnemonics, rhymes and picture clues to identify days of the week, months, seasons and weather as part of the daily circle time activity at registration. Primary pupils used simple mind-mapping techniques very effectively to set out their research on the topic of Vikings and Anglo-Saxons before creating informative pieces of factual writing. Secondary pupils successfully review, analyse and hypothesise, for example in economics, where A-level pupils considered the impact of indirect taxes on supply and demand.
- 3.15 Children in EYFS have a highly positive, 'have a go' attitude to learning, evident in their first visit to the new kindergarten playground. They excitedly explored the permanent and daily activities available to them. Older pupils continue to engage in almost all classes. They collaborate with each other effectively, respect and trial others' ideas, and support those who find work difficult. Secondary pupils show extremely positive attitudes. They want to succeed, and the quality of presentation in their

written work reflects their diligent, purposeful approach. Older pupils perceptively make links to their own experience in lessons which encourage independent thinking. However, opportunities for pupils to take leadership in their own learning are currently limited. In discussion, sixth-form pupils described how much they valued being more involved in their learning at A-level, and felt that they would have benefited from a similar approach at IGCSE. Many show the capability to take more initiative and become more independent in their learning, but they are not always encouraged to do so.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

3.16 The quality of the pupils' personal development is good.

- 3.17 Pupils throughout the school demonstrate well-developed self-esteem and self-confidence for their ages. Most parents responding to the questionnaires agreed that the school successfully supports their child's personal development. In the EYFS, children show good levels of independence for their age, for example as they change their shoes and put on coats to go outside. They show determination and perseverance, preferring to try again rather than ask for help. As they progress through the lower primary, pupils reflect on their own learning successfully and suggest ways to improve, for example using different size brushes in art to blend colours. Older primary pupils reflect on their work perceptively and enjoy identifying and correcting their errors or trailing their own answers. For example, pupils made plausible attempts at writing demanding words, selecting from alternative vowel sound spellings. In line with the school's aim, pupils said they valued the freedom to learn from their mistakes. Secondary pupils respond positively and quickly to feedback in lessons and written work. In the questionnaires many said they valued the regular assessments as an aid to monitor their own progress.
- 3.18 Pupils have high levels of self-understanding, framed in the school's key mission to imbibe confidence, success and belonging. In this respect the school is highly successful at achieving its aim. In particular, pupils' resilience is exceptional. A very high proportion of pupils have moved into the school in the last two years. Many have come from other countries such as Ukraine, Japan, China and Turkey. Without exception pupils settle quickly and are settled quickly by the school. In conversation with pupils, it was impossible to identify those who had joined recently. All spoke of the strong support given by staff and other pupils. In personal, social, cultural, health and economic education (PSCHEE) lessons pupils reflected honestly and without difficulty on their personality and physical traits. They shared their observations maturely with others. In conversations with each other and with adults, pupils are confident, assured, yet politely forceful in arguing their opinions. They are well informed while showing intellectual and personal humility.
- 3.19 Children in the EYFS make appropriate choices by selecting activities that best suit their needs and interests. As a result, they are for the most part, engaged and committed to their activities. In a PSCHEE lesson, primary pupils explained the rationale for their decision-making confidently, identifying how it is critical to friendship, lifestyle and well-being. In a discussion on managing change, secondary pupils showed excellent awareness of the development from young child to teenager to adult, and how decisions at key points are important determinants of success. In discussion, older pupils were astute about the lifestyle choices and pressures encountered in a European capital city and how to deal with them. Secondary pupils' opportunities to influence decisions in school are limited to formal councils and surveys.
- 3.20 Pupils of all ages have a strong spiritual awareness which is often not overt. In discussion, none identified this as expressed through religious faith. Children in EYFS frequently show their excitement and surprise at new experiences, and in the classroom, they can become 'lost in the moment' as they play with sand and other malleable materials. Primary pupils, in creating the recipe for a happy family, reflected that love, trust, laughter and kindness are essential ingredients. The innate capacity of secondary pupils to consider life beyond the material surfaces in many lessons. An IGCSE art piece titled *Tears won't fade away*, linking an oil-painted heart with tied red string, was rooted in pupils'

observations of the effect of regret, depression and frustration on life. Other pupils described how in art they had likened the construction and destruction of buildings to recovery from mental illness. In English lessons, the youngest secondary pupils showed a mature appreciation of the melancholy, despair and hope in Maya Angelou's *Caged Bird*, encouraged by teaching that demanded an emotional response. In a study of *Romeo and Juliet* pupils initiated and encouraged a debate about the emotions felt by different characters, empathising with grief and pain, and exploring the cathartic effect of watching the tragedy. Pupils thrive on the opportunity to contemplate feeling and emotions. In the questionnaires some wrote about their liking of quiet spaces in the school grounds.

- 3.21 Pupils have a sharp understanding of the difference between right and wrong. The very large majority of parents replying to questionnaires stated that the school promotes good behaviour and inspection evidence broadly supports this view. Pupils' understanding develops quickly from an early age. In the EYFS, children respond positively to the classroom rules to which they adhere closely. For example, at the start of the day, children complete an arrival task and then congregate quietly on the carpet ready for registration. Younger pupils recognise the need to follow rules and are quick to point out if they are broken by either their own or an opposing team. Both winners and losers show excellent sportsmanship. Secondary pupils have an equally clear moral code. They apply it in lessons, for example during well-informed discussions of the manipulation of Eliza Doolittle in *Pygmalion*, or the effect of tourism in Venice. They interact and play with each other during breaktimes respectfully, and pupils recognise the importance of not being arrogant or self-opinionated. They feel secure in each other's company. In this context the school successfully fulfils its aim of the security of pupils being valued, understood, and respected. In pair or group work, pupils listen attentively to each other's suggestions, ideas and answers. In a very few lessons, where the objectives of such work are unclear or lack challenge, pupils can show less consideration to and disrupt the progress of others. In the questionnaires a few pupils stated they did not understand the penalties for poor behaviour. In ensuing discussion, they recognised the importance of rules within society and the appropriateness of most school rules. However, many perceived the inconsistency of the application of the school's clear tariffs as leading to most sanctions being ineffective. Inspection evidence supports the view of sixth-form pupils that the strict tariffs defer the opportunity for pupils to take responsibility for their own actions.
- 3.22 Pupils are innately socially aware, keen to help, and naturally work with each other to solve problems from a young age. In the lower primary, pupils demonstrate well-developed listening, sharing, turn-taking and collaborative skills. Children in the EYFS create groups spontaneously, particularly in the periods of free-flow activity. Younger pupils take great pride in being asked to help with classroom tasks such as handing out resources for art or leading their classmates to the hall for a PE lesson. The positive school climate and open-plan building are major contributory factors to an atmosphere that engenders collaboration in the secondary school. Pupils bring their own strong focus to the needs of others, both inside and outside the school. Almost all pupils asked about this area spoke appreciatively of the peer-mentoring programme, and the academic support that they had given and received from other pupils in, *inter alia* reading and ICT. In parallel, almost all felt that they could, and would like to, take more responsibility in other areas of school life. Although COVID-19 has restricted opportunities in recent years, pupils have strong record of contribution to the local community. For example, sixth-form pupils co-ordinated a highly successful Christmas gift appeal for a local charity that supports women and children. Pupils described the strong personal impact of the project, and how it had widened their awareness of the necessity of an altruistic approach beyond their school lives.
- 3.23 Pupils' respect and value of diversity within society is a strength of their personal development. They show respect for and appreciation of their own and other cultures, and demonstrate sensitivity and tolerance to those from different backgrounds and traditions. In the questionnaires, the vast majority of both parents and pupils agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The evidence from discussion with pupils and an interrogation of documentation confirm that racism or any type of discriminatory behaviour on the basis of gender or difference is extremely rare. Sixth-form male and female pupils, interviewed

separately, both confirmed that neither gender tolerated any form of sexual harassment. In the EYFS and lower primary, pupils begin to develop a good understanding of individual differences as they explore topics such as 'all about me'. They create displays showing different jobs and professions through positive images of different races, genders and ableness, promoting respect for diversity. Pupils are very clear in their view that everyone should be accepted as an individual and there is no place for discrimination in the school or in life generally. Upper primary pupils responded sensitively to the plight of refugees through their poetry writing, supported by careful teacher management of a delicate topic. From observations at breaktimes and lessons in the secondary school there is compelling evidence that pupils are inclusive of those from backgrounds different to their own, mixing readily with pupils of other nationalities, backgrounds, and beliefs. As pupils stated, 'we have many races and different economic backgrounds; but we are one school, and we are welcoming'.

- 3.24 Pupils are aware of the importance of physical and mental fitness. Younger children and pupils develop a good understanding of the importance of a healthy diet and how this can impact on their learning. They know that exercise is good for them and can identify the impact of exercise on their bodies. In the EYFS, children show a good understanding of the importance of a healthy diet and how being hungry or thirsty can have an impact on their learning. As they discussed what they had for breakfast during circle time they reflected that 'breakfast turns your brain on'. Secondary pupils enthusiastically engage with sport throughout the school day. Facilities are well used during break and lunchtimes by a significant number of boys and girls from all year groups. They understand the importance of eating a balanced diet, of exercise and of the need for a positive work-life balance to maintain their mental health. In the questionnaires almost all pupils agreed that they felt safe at school and that they knew how to keep safe online.

4. Inspection Evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the president of the foundation, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick and injured pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Stephen Cole	Reporting inspector
Mr Christopher Manville	Accompanying reporting inspector
Mr Michael Clack	Team inspector (Regional head of schools, COBIS)
Mr Stephen Moruzzi	Team inspector (Deputy head, COBIS school, Hungary)
Ms Christine Williams	Team inspector (Head, COBIS school, Italy)