



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

British Schools Overseas

Inspection Report

London Academy Casablanca

May 2023

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School's Details

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|---------------------------------|---|----|------------------|----|
| School | London Academy Casablanca | | | |
| Address | London Academy Casablanca Bouskoura Casablanca 20000 Morocco | | | |
| Telephone number | +212657373737 | | | |
| Email address | info@londonacademy.ma | | | |
| Principal | Mr Samir Benmakhlouf | | | |
| Proprietor | Mr Samir Benmakhlouf | | | |
| Age range | 3 to 18 | | | |
| Number of pupils on roll | 129 | | | |
| | Primary | 45 | Secondary | 70 |
| | Sixth Form | 14 | | |
| Inspection dates | 29 to 30 May 2023 | | | |

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 London Academy Casablanca is a co-educational day school. It was founded in 2017 by the current proprietor who is responsible for governance oversight. There is a sister school in Rabat. The school is divided into two main sections. The primary school caters for pupils between the ages of three and eleven years and the senior school for those between the ages of eleven and eighteen years. This is the school's first inspection with ISI.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 London Academy Casablanca seeks to prepare pupils to thrive, lead and serve in a rapidly changing world, and to develop twenty-first century skills, by striving to challenge them through an academic and co-curricular programme.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils come from a variety of professional and business families and most live within Casablanca. The school's own data show that the ability profile of the pupils is broadly average when compared to those who take similar tests nationally and around the world. English is an additional language (EAL) for most pupils in the school. The school identifies ten pupils as having specific educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Of these, two receive specific support. School data indicate that there are three pupils who are felt to be the more able and the curriculum and teaching is modified to meet their needs.

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 ONLY inspection and as such 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 May 2019.

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets all of the Standards for British Schools Overseas except those which it is precluded from meeting because of the host country's legislation. The requirements of the host country take precedence and no action points are, therefore, specified.**

Part 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The standards relating to the quality of education in paragraphs 3 and 4 and most requirements of paragraph 2 are met. That relating to paragraph 2(2)(d)(ii) (personal, social, health and economic education) cannot be met because it is precluded by the host country's legislation.**
- 2.3 The school provides a balanced curriculum which is broadly based on the National Curriculum requirements in England. It takes into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils. Pupils work towards GCSE and iGCSE examinations and many stay on in the sixth form to study towards AS and A level examinations. Arabic is taught from the earliest age groups. The curriculum allows pupils to acquire a breadth of knowledge in English and mathematics as well as in science, technology and a range of creative subjects such as art and drama. The curriculum also provides a suitable range of physical experiences through physical education and games lessons. There is an appropriate scheme of work for personal, social and health education (PSHE) which is delivered through assigned lessons and assemblies focusing on global perspectives. This pays appropriate attention to the protected characteristics, except where Moroccan law precludes them from being met. Children in the nursery, and in the Reception class follow a curriculum that is broadly based on the early years' requirements in England. This includes learning and developing skills through both inside and outdoor play alongside teacher-initiated activities. The older pupils receive suitable careers advice and guidance, especially with regard to potential university placements. Many go on to university placements in the United States of America and the United Kingdom as well as elsewhere in the world. This graduation to universities is successfully combined with work experience and internships with local companies. There is an appropriate programme of activities for pupils of all ages. As a result of the range of experiences that the curriculum offers, pupils learn and make progress and develop key skills that prepares them well for the next stages of their lives and education.
- 2.4 Teachers know their pupils well and enable them to plan effectively to meet pupils' individual needs. The teaching is adaptable, ensuring that either extension or consolidation work can be employed as required to ensure that pupils maximise the use of their time in class. As a result, pupils develop a broad knowledge base across all areas of learning and make good progress according to their ability. All teachers have a good knowledge of the subject matter being taught and they utilise a range of resources effectively. The teachers also successfully use a range of strategies to ensure that pupil behaviour is appropriate by keeping them engaged and motivated. Pupils were seen to show resilience and tenacity especially when faced with challenging work that encourages self-motivation. The teaching takes every opportunity to promote fundamental British values. There is a strong focus on respect and tolerance amongst those from different backgrounds and who hold different beliefs. The school pays appropriate attention to the protected characteristics except where Moroccan law precludes them from being met.
- 2.5 There is an effective programme of both formative and summative assessments throughout the school. There are regular formal assessments to check pupils' understanding of the curriculum being taught. Assessment data is used effectively by teachers to plan next stages of learning and to enable pupils of all ages to make progress.

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

- 2.6 The requirements relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, paragraphs 5(a) and (b)(i) to (v) and (vii) is met, but the requirement in paragraph 5(b)(vi) cannot be met because it is precluded by the host country's legislation.**
- 2.7 Pupils display high levels of self-confidence as shown in all inspection activities, particularly during group discussions. They show strong self-awareness and understand the importance of being in a multi-cultural school community. Pupils have a depth of understanding of fundamental British values and say that they learn about aspects of the democratic process, the rule of law and tolerance through displays around the school, themed assemblies and in class discussions. This is confirmed in scrutiny of related schemes of work. The election of councillors across the school strengthens pupils' understanding of the democratic process. Pupils develop an appropriate understanding of right and wrong and the school's approach to restorative justice ensures that pupils understand the implications of their actions. As a result, they reflect on their behaviour and modify their approaches in order to minimise the risk of any reoccurrence. Pupils have a strong sense of community and become actively involved in a wide range of activities that have a positive impact on the lives of others. These include fundraising initiatives and holding half-day tournaments across the age groups to unify the school community whilst having fun.
- 2.8 The school ensures that the Equality Act in the United Kingdom is followed in so far as the law in Morocco will allow. The protected characteristics relating to disability, sex, pregnancy and maternity, marriage, age, race, religion or belief are actively promoted. Those relating to gender reassignment, civil partnership and sexual orientation are precluded from being met because of the laws in the host country. Most pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that the school encourages them to be tolerant of people with different faiths and beliefs and to respect other people. In discussions with inspectors, pupils showed that they have a balanced view on a range of political and social issues. They readily acknowledged that everyone has a right to their own opinions, even if it differs from their own. This assists in their integration in both an international and national sense, enabling them to be caring and responsible citizens.

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 The school has a suitable safeguarding policy that is implemented effectively. All staff, including those who have specific safeguarding responsibilities, are appropriately trained. Most training takes place online through specific learning modules, modelled around statutory requirements in the United Kingdom. There has been a key focus on aspects such as child-on-child abuse and reporting low-level concerns about staff. Such training ensures that staff are aware of the types of abuse and how to identify any signs and symptoms. The designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) understand the importance of their role and carry out their duties effectively. They provide a valuable source of support and advice for all staff who also understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. There is very limited help and guidance for the DSLs available through Moroccan agencies. However, the DSLs do understand that any serious concerns can always be reported to the police. They also understand the importance of linking with other agencies around the world, including in the United Kingdom, should the need arise.
- 2.11 In the questionnaire, most pupils reported that they feel safe in school and understand how to stay safe online. This was confirmed during discussions with inspectors. Pupils also feel that there is always someone to whom they can talk should they have any worries and concerns, knowing that appropriate action will be taken when required. This is confirmed in records of safeguarding. The proprietor has effective oversight of the school's safeguarding arrangements, which includes a review of both policy and practice. There is a suitable staff code of conduct in place and, in discussions, staff showed that

they understand the importance of issues such as lone-working and the use of social media, when keeping children safe.

- 2.12 The DSLs maintain appropriate records on all pupil related matters. These enable safeguarding leads to have an effective oversight on all matters relating to pupils' wellbeing. The school ensures, through a programme of education and oversight of internet access, that pupils are aware of the potential dangers of extremist activities and radicalisation.
- 2.13 There is a suitable policy on building positive behaviour in place. This is implemented effectively through a six-step programme, through which corrective behaviours are put in place. The focus is on pupils reviewing any poor behaviours and developing strategies by which they can understand the impact of their actions on others. Coupled with this, they can then ensure such behaviours are not repeated. A scrutiny of the school logs shows the positive impact of this approach. Logs are kept by pastoral leads who record all reported incidents and they categorise any cases in order to identify any patterns or trends. In discussions, pupils and staff describe the behaviour around the school as good and lively and this was confirmed by inspection observations.
- 2.14 The pastoral leads ensure that there is an effective policy in place that sets out clearly the required approach to dealing with any concerns. They carefully monitor any bullying incidents. Pupils feel that there are very few incidents of bullying and this was confirmed through a scrutiny of records. No bullying incidents recorded relate to any of the protected characteristics. Pupils are well educated about bullying through their form times, the global citizenship programme and assemblies. They also sign a code of conduct for the acceptable use of technology. Staff receive suitable training in the school's anti-bullying procedures. In the questionnaires, most pupils felt that the school does all that it can to prevent bullying from happening. Parents are kept suitably informed of any behavioural or bullying incident.
- 2.15 The school has suitable health and safety arrangements in place. There is an appropriate policy that is implemented effectively. A tour of the school premises showed that the school places a high importance on the safety of the pupils whilst on the site. There is appropriate security. The school's system for the recording of all health and safety matters, including maintenance checks, was strengthened during the inspection visit. These changes are appropriately designed to ensure that effective oversight can take place. There is suitable staff training, including in first aid. Appropriate records are kept of any accidents that might occur on the school site. In discussions, staff stated that any health and safety concerns that are reported are dealt with swiftly.
- 2.16 The school ensures that suitable fire procedures are implemented. In discussions, pupils spoke confidently about the arrangements for when the fire evacuation alarm is sounded. They stated that drills are regular and that they behave sensibly and calmly. The evacuation of the school building is overseen by fire wardens for each area. There are appropriate arrangements to minimise the risk of fire and all equipment and installations are checked and serviced regularly. The school's fire safety arrangements conform to local requirements, including for a fire risk assessment.
- 2.17 The school has a suitable policy on first aid that is implemented effectively. There are an appropriate number of staff trained in first aid and there is a medical room where the school nurse is based. Within this area there is appropriate storage for any medication. Parents are kept informed when any medication is administered. There are medical boxes located around the school so that first aid can be administered promptly when required. Staff are kept informed of any pupil medical conditions. A suitable log is kept of any accidents that may occur.
- 2.18 Pupils are effectively supervised at all times, including before and after school and during break and lunch times. In discussions, they spoke of how there is always a member of staff nearby should they need any help or support. In the questionnaire almost all pupils felt that they are well supervised in school and on school trips.
- 2.19 Attendance registration is undertaken regularly throughout the school day. Staff use an application that sends all the information to the school's administration team which follows up on any

unexplained absences in a timely manner. Information relating to pupils' admission to the school is also kept electronically. At the time of the inspection key information was kept in a variety of places. This has now been streamlined, ensuring that all required details are available immediately. The school conforms to local regulatory requirements.

- 2.20 The school's approach to managing risk is outlined in the health and safety policy and is suitable. Scrutiny of risk assessments for aspects of school life, such as trips and visits, demonstrates an effective approach to identifying potential risk and then mitigating against such risks. Appropriate risk assessments are in place for potential areas of additional risk within the school, such as the science laboratory. The school's approach to recording and monitoring other areas of risk is less well developed although awareness of related risks and their mitigation is appropriate. The school recognises this and has put suitable measures in place to ensure effective oversight of this process.

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

- 2.21 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**
- 2.22 The school has recently updated its safer recruitment procedures and how information from this process is captured. This has culminated in a stronger system of recording on the register of appointments and greater oversight of details kept in staff files. As a result, all staff working in the school, and the proprietor, now have appropriate checks in place and the school maintains a suitable register. The school does not use supply staff.

Part 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.23 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**
- 2.24 The school ensures that all premises and accommodation are suitable for use by pupils and staff. There are adequate age-appropriate toilet and washing facilities strategically located around the school. There are facilities for adults that are separate from those used by the pupils. There is a suitable medical room that is located in the heart of the school and is staffed by the school nurse. It has appropriate space for pupils when they may feel unwell or should they require treatment. The room contains a washbasin and there are toilet facilities suitably near. The site is well maintained and any identified hazards are dealt with quickly by the school. The acoustics within the building are suitable for the activities that take place and there is appropriate lighting in all rooms. There is exterior lighting which enables safe access to and egress from the building during the hours of darkness. There is a constant supply of cold water to all facilities and hot water temperatures are suitably controlled. There are drinking stations located around the building for pupils and staff to access. To the rear of the building there are large play and recreation areas where physical education and games lessons are held. The same areas provide space for the pupils to play and relax at break and lunch times.

Part 6 – Provision of information

- 2.25 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.**
- 2.26 The school ensures that all required policies and procedures are made available to parents of both current and prospective pupils through the school's website. These include the arrangements for safeguarding, admissions, misbehaviour and exclusions, provision for SEND and EAL, the school's academic performance, complaints procedure, curriculum policy, arrangements for promoting good behaviour, preventing bullying, health and safety, and first aid. The school website also contains information about the school's accreditation as a British school overseas and the contact details for the school and proprietor. Additionally, the school's ethos and values are also shared on the school

website, as is the number of formal complaints received during the preceding academic year. Parents and carers are provided with an annual report of their children's progress and attainment.

Part 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.27 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

2.28 The school's complaints procedure is made available on an open area of the school website. The procedure allows for complaints to be initially heard on an informal basis. School logs show that all complaints over the past few years fall into this category and that arrangements have been implemented effectively. The complaints process allows for a second stage whereby the complainant can write to the proprietor with their concerns. Should the complainant still feel that their complaint has not been answered satisfactorily they can elect to move to stage three in the process which involves a panel hearing. The panel would be convened by the proprietor and made up of three people who are not directly involved in the complaint. One member would be independent from the running and management of the school. At any such panel a parent may elect to be accompanied should they wish. The school's arrangements make provision for the panel to make findings and recommendations and for a confidential record to be kept of findings, whether they are upheld or not.

Part 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

2.30 The leadership and management of the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfilment of responsibilities so that the BSO standards are met consistently, and the wellbeing of pupils is actively promoted. Leaders and managers understand their roles and work effectively to improve their arrangements to ensure pupils are well looked after and are safe.

3. Inspection Evidence

- 3.1 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 proprietor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form times 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 Graham Gorton

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