



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**British Schools Overseas**

**Inspection Report**

**École Montessori Casablanca**

**May 2022**

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## School's Details

<b>School College</b>	École Montessori Casablanca			
<b>Address</b>	École Montessori Casablanca 6 Lot Hanane Boulevard Panoramique Casablanca Morocco			
<b>Telephone number</b>	+ 212522219688			
<b>Email address</b>	aicha.sajid@montessoricasablanca.com			
<b>Headteacher &amp; Proprietor</b>	Ms Aicha Sajid			
<b>Age range</b>	1 to 15			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	171			
	<b>Age 1 - 4</b>	42	<b>Age 4 - 7</b>	64
	<b>Age 7 - 11</b>	48	<b>Age 11 - 15</b>	17
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26 to 27 May 2022			

## **1. Background Information**

### **About the school**

- 1.1 École Montessori Casablanca is a co-educational day school. Founded in 2011, it is managed by its proprietor, who also acts as head of school. It comprises three campuses: the Californie campus, located in a suburb to the south-west of the city, for pupils aged between 1 and 11 years; the CIL campus, which is located in the western suburbs of the city, for pupils in the same age range; and the House of Youth for pupils aged from 11 to 15 years. The latter is accommodated in a purpose-built villa in Bouskara village on the outskirts of Casablanca.

### **What the school seeks to do**

- 1.2 Based on the Montessori principle that a child should be able to face the unknown with confidence, the school aims to give children the necessary tools to adapt to the world in which they live by developing their communication, collaboration, leadership and analytical skills, as well as their initiative, curiosity, and imagination.

### **About the pupils**

- 1.3 Most pupils are of Moroccan nationality and come from professional and business families in the Casablanca area. The school has identified seven pupils as having special needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia. They receive individual help in class from teaching assistants. English is an additional language (EAL) for the majority of pupils, who receive individual support according to 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. This is the school's first BSO inspection.

## 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 aspects of paragraph 2 are met. Those relating to paragraph 2(2)(d)(ii) (personal, social, health and economic education) are not met because it is precluded by the host country's legislation.**
- 2.3 The curriculum effectively takes account of the aptitudes and needs of pupils of all ages, including those with SEND and the more able. The breadth of the curriculum is suitable, providing pupils with experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative education. It enables them to acquire speaking, listening literacy and numeracy skills and is highly effective in developing pupils' understanding and use of spoken and written English. The curriculum is firmly rooted in the core principles of Montessori pedagogy. It is divided into three sections to cover the periods of infancy (1 to 6 years), childhood (6 to 12 years) and adolescence (12 - 15 years and beyond). In each section, it is implemented through appropriate plans and schemes of work which originate from Montessori principles. The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' development, enabling them to achieve appropriate levels of independence according to their age. These range from independence at a physical level, through the development of independent thinking and intellectual questioning to establishing the capacity for pupils to take their place as a contributing member of a larger society, equipped with conscience and consciousness.
- 2.4 The school's programme of extra-curricular activities, designed to provide opportunities for pupils to gain additional skills, has been restricted due to the pandemic. This is reflected in the pre-inspection questionnaires, where a small minority of parents and pupils felt there was not a suitable range of extra-curricular activities. Older pupils benefit from a range of activities which are built into the curriculum, however, for example gardening, cookery, sport and music, all of which provide suitable opportunities for pupils to pursue their own interests and talents.
- 2.5 The curriculum enables pupils to learn and make progress, and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in both Moroccan and British society and for the next stage of their education. All pupils who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school gives them the opportunity to learn and make progress. Both curriculum and teaching promote respect for certain protected characteristics, namely age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, sex, race and religion or belief, but the promotion of aspects relating to gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership and sexual orientation are precluded by local legislation. The school is successful in its aim to enable pupils to become independent and responsible members of the school and the wider community. Suitable careers education is provided given the ages of the pupils.
- 2.6 Teaching shows a detailed understanding of individual pupils' needs and abilities and demonstrates secure subject knowledge and effective use of resources. It utilises a suitable range of approaches to foster application and interest and enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress. Strategies for managing behaviour in class are highly effective. In discussion, pupils show a mature understanding of fundamental British values and teaching does not discriminate against pupils due to their gender, ability, beliefs, disability or race. The school has a suitable framework to report on pupils' performance.

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

- 2.7 The standards relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5(a) and (b)(i) to (v) and (vii), (c) and (d)] are met. Some elements of paragraph 5(b)(vi) are not met because it is precluded by the host country's legislation.**
- 2.8 Through its PSHE programme and the curriculum as a whole, the school actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. It enables pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence, to distinguish right from wrong and to accept responsibility for their behaviour. Pupils show respect for each other and for the staff, and they actively contribute both to the school and the wider community through service, the fulfilment of leadership roles and charity work. They gain knowledge of public institutions in England and the responsibilities of citizenship both through the PSHE programme and by acting out those responsibilities as part of their daily school lives. This enables them not only to develop a keen sense of social awareness, but also to understand the importance of laws and justice and teaches them to have respect for the democratic process. The school encourages a balanced presentation of political issues and precludes partisan political views. It ensures that principles are actively promoted which encourage respect for other people, in so far as is allowed by the laws of the host country, as outlined above.

## 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 which take account of both UK and local requirements and practices are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils. Effective implementation of the safeguarding policy ensures the protection of pupils from all types of abuse and harm, including the dangers of extremism. Staff are appropriately trained when they join the school and subsequently through training sessions and updates when required. In discussion, they confirmed that they feel suitably equipped to deal with concerns relating to pupils. Staff are aware of their responsibilities with regard to the code of conduct and whistleblowing policies. Effective structures exist to ensure that pupils are listened to and given early help, and they receive suitable guidance relating to issues that might affect their welfare, health and safety through the PSHE programme and the broader curriculum. The proprietor oversees safeguarding effectively by undertaking an annual review of safeguarding policies and procedures, in addition to being briefed on a daily basis by the safeguarding team. The school operates suitable safer recruitment procedures. All pupils interviewed and all those responding to the questionnaire agreed that they feel safe in the school and that they can talk to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or a member of staff if they are worried or concerned in the knowledge that appropriate action will be taken.
- 2.11 Procedures to promote good behaviour are known and understood by pupils and staff and are implemented effectively. A suitable system of rewards celebrates pupils' success, efforts and achievements, and appropriate sanctions are applied if the need arises. In their questionnaire responses, all pupils agreed that the school encourages them to behave well. Records are kept of all behavioural issues, and these are effectively monitored in order to identify any trends. Bullying, including cyber-bullying, is prevented as far as is reasonably practical and pupils expressed confidence in the fact that the school does all it can to prevent it and takes appropriate action in response to reported incidents.
- 2.12 The school complies with relevant health and safety laws and fire safety standards, including those which apply locally. Record-keeping is thorough and shows that there is an effective overview of health and safety procedures. Fire drills are carried out regularly and suitably recorded, there is a suitable system for the provision and maintenance of clear emergency routes and exits and an effective maintenance programme for fire detectors, alarms and extinguishers. Pupils are appropriately supervised throughout the school day and on school trips. The premises are maintained

to a suitable level of safety and hygiene, and admission and attendance registers are appropriately maintained. The school has suitable policies for first aid and their effective implementation enables pupils who are ill or injured to be treated in a timely manner. Suitable risk assessments have been drawn up for all areas of the school and its activities and they are implemented effectively.

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

**2.13 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 18–21] are met.**

2.14 The school carries out the required checks on staff, proprietors and any other adults working or volunteering at the school to ensure their suitability to work with children, in line with both local requirements and guidance issued to schools in the UK. These include local and overseas police checks, the right to work in Morocco, medical suitability, qualifications and employment history. A suitable single central register of appointments is maintained which details the recruitment checks undertaken. Staff files include all the required documentation.

#### **Part 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools**

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

2.16 Suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided for pupils of all ages and a medical room caters for the needs of pupils who are ill or injured. It has appropriate washing facilities and is close to a toilet. Premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety requirements. Acoustic conditions and both internal and external lighting are suitable. The provision of drinking water is adequate. Sufficient outdoor space is available for physical education and play, though the restricted space of two of the campuses necessitates off-site physical education lessons.

#### **Part 6 – Provision of information**

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

2.18 All the information required by the standards is provided or made available to current parents and parents of prospective pupils. The contact details for the school, the head of school, the proprietor and a statement of the school's aims and ethos are published on the school's website. Policies and particulars of arrangements for admissions, misbehaviour and exclusions; provision for pupils with SEND; the procedure for complaints; the curriculum; arrangements to promote good behaviour and to prevent bullying; health and safety and the school's provision for first aid are made available on the school's website. The school's policy on safeguarding pupils is published on the school's website. The school provides a written report on each pupil's progress and attainment annually.

#### **Part 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled**

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

2.20 The school's complaints procedure is published on the school's website. It provides for a three-stage process with clear timescales, including an initial informal stage. If concerns are not resolved informally, parents are able to proceed to a formal stage by submitting a complaint in writing. If the concerns still remain unresolved, the school makes provision for a hearing before a panel which includes at least one person independent of the management and running of the school, which parents may attend, accompanied if they wish. The panel will then make findings and recommendations. A confidential record is kept of all complaints and findings, including action taken by the school, whether or not the complaint is upheld. The school's records indicate prompt responses to any concerns or complaints received, all of which have been resolved informally.



## **Part 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools**

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

2.22 The leadership and management of the school, including the proprietor, demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities so that the BSO standards are met consistently and the well-being of the pupils is promoted.

### 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 and attended group meetings. 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 Fox

Reporting inspector

Mr Andrew Ryan

Team inspector (Head, IAPS school, Turkey)