



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

British Schools Overseas

Inspection Report

Kuwait International English School

March 2023

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School's Details

School	Kuwait International English School			
Address	Al Hassan Al Bassri Street Block 10 Hawally Kuwait 30000 Kuwait			
Telephone number	+965 22219228			
Email address	info@kieskuwait.com			
Principal	Mr Edward Myler-Crook			
Chair of governors	Miss Lana Othman Al-Ayyar			
Proprietor	Al Rayan Holding Company			
Age range	3 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	766			
	EYFS	146	Juniors	369
	Seniors	246	Sixth Form	5
Inspection dates	15 to 16 March 2023			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Kuwait International English School is a privately owned, English-speaking international primary and secondary co-educational day school. The school is located in the Hawally region close to Kuwait City. The school has specialist teaching rooms for information and communication technology (ICT), design technology (DT), music, art, science and performing arts. The school has access to sports facilities, including several artificial pitches, a swimming pool and indoor hall.
- 1.2 The strategic direction of the school is overseen by the Al Rayan Holding Company (ARHC) who are the proprietors of the school. Day-to-day governance is a shared responsibility between the school's senior leaders and ARHC. They work in close collaboration with the chief executive officer, who is the chair of the governing board.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to enable pupils to become motivated, effective and independent learners by helping each to realise their full potential. It strives to inspire, connect and engage with young minds through providing English-based education of the highest standards, developing character and ambition in order to educate pupils who will become the leading lights of tomorrow.

About the pupils

- 1.4 The majority of pupils come from professional families living in or close to Kuwait City. The pupils represent a wide range of nationalities with the majority being from Egypt and Kuwait. The school has identified nine pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia and dyspraxia, all of whom receive help from the school through in-class support. There are 32 pupils who receive support for English as an additional language (EAL) in the school. The school has identified ten pupils as being the most able in the school's population, for whom the curriculum is modified to provide them with enrichment opportunities.

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.

This is the school's first accreditation inspection. Accreditation as a British school overseas lasts for three years.

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 2(1)(a) and (b) and paragraphs 2(2)(a) to (c), (d)(i) and (e) to (i), and the Standards relating to teaching in sub-paragraphs 3(a) to (i) are met. Those relating to paragraph 2(2)(d)(ii) (curriculum) and sub-paragraph 3(j) (teaching in respect of protected characteristics) cannot be met because they are precluded by the host country's legislation.**
- 2.3 The school curriculum is balanced and provides pupils with suitable experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative education. Pupils are enabled to acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills and a good understanding of English. Policies, plans and schemes of work for all subjects take account of the ages, aptitudes and needs of the pupils, including those with SEND. Subject planning reflects teachers' awareness of the needs of pupils and their prior learning and schemes of work follow the UK national curriculum closely.
- 2.4 The majority of pupils do not have English as a first language. However, their spoken and written English enables them to cope well with curriculum taught largely in English. In discussion with inspectors pupils were fluent, engaging and keen to talk about their successes in the school. They expressed themselves well in English, which they were using as either a second, or in some cases a third, language. A small number of pupils with less competence in English are offered effective specialist support in the form of extra lessons and in class support. The academic programme includes both Arabic and Islamic studies, a requirement for all schools in Kuwait.
- 2.5 In the pre-inspection questionnaires, a small minority of parents did not think that the school provides a suitable range of extra-curricular activities. However, this is mostly related to the curtailment of activities due to the pandemic. Such activities are slowly opening up as restrictions decrease, allowing clubs such as music, band and choir to be re-established, soon to be followed by inter-school sport. A minority of pupils in the questionnaire felt that some lessons lack challenge and interest. Inspection evidence shows that nearly all lessons visited were well prepared, with a good range of suitable activities provided to both challenge and stimulate the pupils across the ability ranges and year groups.
- 2.6 Teaching enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress. This is shown by results at IGCSE level which indicate that most pupils attain at levels above the average when compared to schools in the UK undertaking similar examinations. The lower number of pupils taking A-level courses does not allow for similar comparisons to be made. Early Years' assessment and monitoring show that children make the progress expected. The majority of parents and pupils in their response to the questionnaires considered that teaching enables good progress. Effective additional support is provided by the intervention team for the small number of pupils who join the school with SEND.
- 2.7 In most lessons, throughout the school, teaching is well planned. It includes suitable challenge for the most able pupils and employs effective teaching methods, using a variety of resources, including the projection of resources onto whiteboards. Pupils are highly responsive and engaged in lessons and their behaviour is of a high standard. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and understanding, and effective behaviour management. They know the pupils well and provide for their individual aptitudes and needs. The curriculum encourages respect for other people but is unable to pay particular regard to protected characteristics as defined in British law as these are not recognised in local legislation, with the promotion of some characteristics precluded.

- 2.8 Pupils' performance is measured through a variety of ways, including termly and topic assessments, though these are currently not benchmarked to UK standards. Pupils work is marked against understood learning objectives in most cases. This is not yet consistent across the school and senior leaders are working towards a stricter adherence to the school's marking policy. Pupils are provided with suitable targets to measure success in both the primary and the secondary schools. These match the good practice seen in many lessons. Careers guidance is offered to secondary school pupils from Year 9 in connection with IGCSE subject selection and university guidance is provided to older pupils by educational consultants and through university partnership links, which are approved by the education ministry.

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

- 2.9 **The Standards relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in sub-paragraphs 5(a), (b)(i) to (v) and (vii) are met, but that in sub-paragraph 5(b)(vi) [encouraging respect for other people] cannot be met because it is precluded by the country's legislation.**
- 2.10 The school 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. Displays seen throughout the school support these values. Teaching promotes principles which enable pupils to develop self-knowledge, esteem and confidence; to distinguish right from wrong; and to accept responsibility for their behaviour. Additionally, life-skills lessons encourage pupils to contribute to the lives of others; gain knowledge and respect for public institutions in England; and for the responsibilities of Kuwaiti citizenship. The school encourages tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions, including between the predominant Kuwaiti and Egyptian pupil populations within the school. It promotes a balanced presentation of political views and the preclusion of partisan political views. The school encourages respect for other people with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in the UK Equality Act 2010, namely age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation, except where they are precluded by the country's legislation.
- 2.11 In discussion with pupils, across all age groups, they confirmed that they are encouraged to contribute views on the operation of the school. They are able to raise concerns and complaints and a number of pupils were able to indicate changes that had been made in response to their concerns. Pupils made positive reference to their involvement with student council meetings and house meetings as a means of ensuring that their views were taken into account. Pupils confirmed that the school promotes high levels of mutual respect and support between pupils, and this was evident in pupil discussions.

Part 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.12 **The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16] are met.**
- 2.13 Appropriate arrangements are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school. Such arrangements take account of Kuwaiti law and have regard to guidance in the United Kingdom. The school ensures that staff training, including that for governors is appropriate. It enables pupils to be listened to and provided with early help. The particular vulnerability of the small number of pupils with SEND is acknowledged and allowances are made for them. Those with particular responsibility for safeguarding have an up-to-date level of training for their roles, including a designated figure in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). There is an appropriate safeguarding governor in place and the school adheres to local child protection regulations. New staff receive appropriate induction training. Pupils receive suitable guidance relating to issues that might affect their welfare, health and safety through the social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) and the personal, social and health education (PSHE) programmes, assemblies and tutor time. There is suitable review of safeguarding procedures. Pupil discussions indicated that they felt well looked after in the school, that they found

the school culture to be friendly and welcoming and that there is a clear sense of pride in being a member of the school community.

- 2.14 Procedures to promote good behaviour are known and understood by pupils and are effectively implemented by staff. A suitable system of rewards celebrates pupils' success, efforts and achievements. Appropriate sanctions are applied if the need arises. In the primary section, a weekly celebration assembly focuses on the successes of the younger age groups. A keenly contested house points system operates across all school sections. Records are appropriately kept of the very few behavioural incidents that occur, and these are effectively monitored in order to identify any trends. Bullying including cyber-bullying is prevented as far as is reasonably practical. Local requirements with regard to the inappropriate use of the internet and social media are met.
- 2.15 Pupils in discussions confirmed that the school provided a safe and healthy environment. Although, in the questionnaire, a minority of pupils felt that some bullying is not managed well by the school, pupils unanimously confirmed in discussions that bullying is very rare and that the school would always deal with bullying when it was reported to teachers. Pupil behaviour, as seen around the school, is of a high standard and reflects the school values of empathy and kindness. Records indicate that sanctions, which are rarely required, are applied consistently.
- 2.16 The school complies with relevant health and safety laws and fire safety standards, including those which apply under local law. Record keeping in this area is thorough and shows that the school ensures effective overview of health and safety procedures. Fire drills are carried out regularly for all sections of the school and are suitably recorded. There is a suitable system for the provision and maintenance of emergency routes and exits and an effective maintenance programme for fire detectors, alarms and extinguishers. The premises are maintained to a suitable level of safety and hygiene, and admission and attendance registers are appropriately maintained. The school has appropriate policies for first aid and their effective implementation. A small minority of pupils in the questionnaire stated that first aid treatment is not always prompt but pupil discussions and records showed that pupils who are ill or injured are almost always treated in a timely and appropriate manner. The school has an arrangement with a nearby local hospital to provide emergency assistance when required and a school nurse is always in attendance during the school day.
- 2.17 A satisfactory programme of risk assessments has been drawn up for most areas of the school and any related activities pupils undertake. These can vary in quality and do not currently follow a common protocol. Currently senior leaders are working with the proprietor to ensure that all risk assessments follow the same methodology and rigour when assessing potential risk. There is effective monitoring of the security of all school entrances and exits to create a secure and safe environment for both pupils and staff.
- 2.18 Pupils of all ages are appropriately supervised throughout the school day and on school trips. Appropriate supervision rotas cover all sections of the school, including in the EYFS where children are in sight and hearing distance of teachers at all times. Rotas appropriately require staff to be on duty at break and lunchtimes and when pupils are arriving or departing from the school during the day. Appropriate extra precautions are taken during periods of extreme heat, when pupils wear sunhats and outdoor sports activities are appropriately restricted.

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

- 2.19 **The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**
- 2.20 The school carries out the required checks on staff, proprietors and any other adults working at the school to ensure suitability to work with children. These meet local requirements and guidance issued to schools in the UK. The proprietor carries out checks on all staff working in its schools and the resulting documentation is held centrally at head office. All staff obtain a right to work directive from

the Ministry once suitable checks are completed. In addition, all UK nationals are checked through the disclosure and barring service (DBS) and barred list checks as well as through international child protection certificate (ICPC) checks. All staff are required to be in possession of a national identity card before commencing work. A suitable single central register appointments is maintained which details the recruitment checks undertaken. Staff files include all of the required documentation and are well maintained.

Part 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

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

2.22 Suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided for pupils of all ages. There is appropriate changing accommodation for all pupils. A medical room, with an adjacent toilet facility, is located within the school site and this caters appropriately for the needs of pupils who are ill or injured. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety expectations, including local requirements. Identified maintenance issues are rectified quickly. Acoustic conditions and both internal and external lighting are suitable. The provision of drinking water is suitable as water dispenser units are available on every floor level. The provision of handwashing stations throughout the school meets covid hygiene requirements. Throughout the school, air-conditioning and effective shading ensures that classrooms are maintained at a suitable working temperature. There is good provision of spaces available for physical education, including a hall, recreation room, an outdoor artificial surface sport and recreation area and a swimming pool. Although recreation space and sports areas are shared facilities across year groups, appropriate timetabling enables separate use of these facilities between the different sections of the school. Centrally located play and recreation space is suitably shaded to protect pupils from the heat and provides suitable space for outdoor play.

Part 6 – Provision of information

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

2.24 All of the required information to comply with the standards is provided or made available to current parents and parents of prospective pupils. The contact details for the school, the principal, the chair of the board of management 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 and any with EAL; the procedure for complaints; the curriculum; arrangements to promote good behaviour and to prevent bullying; health and safety and the schools' provision for first aid are also made available to parents. 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 on at least a termly basis and there are two parental meetings held each year to allow parents to discuss their child's progress. Curriculum information sheets are sent home on a half termly basis and there is an online parental portal that facilitates communication between the home and school.

Part 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

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

2.26 The school's complaints procedures are available on the school's website. They provide for concerns and complaints to be considered on an informal basis; enable a formal procedure for complaints to be made in writing; and provide for a hearing before a panel which includes an independent member should parents remain dissatisfied. The procedure allows for parents to be accompanied; for the panel to make findings and recommendations; and for a confidential record to be kept on the findings, including action taken by the school, whether or not the complaint is upheld. A further process is

available for parents who wish to take their complaint to the Ministry, who will respond with a recommendation.

- 2.27 The majority of parents replying to the questionnaire said that they receive timely and helpful responses to their questions, concerns or complaints and the school's records indicate suitably prompt responses to any concerns or complaints received, in line with the published procedures. Almost all complaints are resolved informally.

Part 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- 2.29 The leadership and management of the school, including members of the board of management, 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 actively promoted. Members of the board of management are regular visitors to the school and the chair of the board convenes periodic operational meetings to ensure they are kept fully informed on school matters. In addition, individual members of the management board have a focused overview of safeguarding, health and safety and staff recruitment. These arrangements ensure effective oversight and monitoring of the school's policies and procedures. There is an increasing management focus on well-being through the provision of counselling.

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 a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings 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

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