



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

British Schools Overseas

Inspection Report

British School of Bucharest

March 2022

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School's Details

School	British School of Bucharest			
Address	42 Erou Iancu Nicolae 077190 Voluntari Ilfov County Bucharest Romania			
Telephone number	0040 21 267 8919			
Email address	office@britishschool.ro			
Headmaster	Mr Grant Gillies			
Proprietor	Crawford House			
Age range	2 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	619			
	EYFS	45	Juniors	278
	Seniors	230	Sixth Form	66
Inspection dates	15 to 18 March 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 The British School of Bucharest (BSB) is a co-educational day school. It opened in 2000 and moved to its current site in a residential suburb north of Bucharest city centre in 2008. It prepares pupils for entry to UK and other European independent schools, and to universities. The school is owned by Crawford House, a not-for-profit foundation. The proprietor is president of the board of the foundation and administrator of BSB Sports and Services. She oversees the management of the school and works with its leadership to support and develop the school's educational provision. The campus is based around the original two, three-storey buildings, to which other indoor and outdoor facilities have been added. The school comprises two sections, primary which includes the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and secondary, including a sixth form. The current head was appointed in September 2021.
- 1.2 The inspection took into account the circumstances faced by schools during the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions imposed by national government guidance at various points of the pandemic.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to provide a comprehensive international education with a significant intellectual foundation that prepares pupils to continue their education anywhere in the world. Particular emphasis is placed on providing pupils with a positive, stimulating, secure and caring environment that encourages the fulfilment of individual potential and the growth of self-esteem in all areas. In addition, the school seeks to encourage open enquiry, creativity, decision-making and independent thought, and to develop pupils' knowledge and respect for different cultures, values and beliefs. The school places a high priority on preparing pupils to become active and responsible citizens of the world community, based on its core values.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils come both from expatriate families, with parents working in a range of businesses as well as embassies, governmental and non-governmental organisations; and from local families predominantly with backgrounds in business. One-third of the pupils are Romanian and one-fifth are native English speakers, mostly British. Pupils represent 55 other nationalities. Standardised tests indicate that the ability profile of both the primary and the secondary schools, including the sixth form, is above average for those taking similar tests. The school has identified 33 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 19 of whom receive specialist learning support for speech and language needs, dyspraxia, dyslexia and other behavioural and learning difficulties. There are 464 pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL), of whom 38 receive additional support. There are 98 pupils who have been identified by the school as more able, gifted and talented. They are supported through additional challenge in lessons and separate enrichment programmes in both sections of the school.

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 March 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 Pupils in both sections follow an appropriate curriculum that is aligned to the National Curriculum for England and reflects the aims of the school. It enables pupils to make good progress in the context of the standard. 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.
- 2.4 In the Early Years, children follow a programme based on the English EYFS requirements. In the secondary school, pupils are prepared for GCSE and A-level examinations. The curriculum is broadened by a range of additional and co-curricular activities. The spread of opportunities provided and the values of the school prepare pupils for life in British society. Schemes of work reflect curriculum planning throughout the school. Older pupils receive appropriate careers advice and guidance.
- 2.5 The school provides equal opportunities for all pupils to learn and make progress, including those with SEND, EAL and those identified as more able or particularly talented. Pupils with SEND or EAL receive additional support, following appropriate identification of their individual needs, through individual or small group tuition and through work that is suitably adapted for their needs in class. Pupils who have been identified as more able are provided with a range of additional challenges, related both to the curriculum and to wider experiences. This is achieved through a programme of enrichment opportunities, including a variety of problem-solving activities related to the outside world.
- 2.6 Pupils make good progress as a result of effective teaching that is well planned and benefits from the use of a wide range of appropriate resources and facilities. Good behaviour in lessons results from motivating teaching which reflects teachers' extensive subject knowledge and understanding of the pupils' needs. Appropriate teaching methods lead to effective learning throughout the school. A suitable framework is in place to assess pupils' performance and to track their progress. Information from this is used to plan teaching in order to meet the varied needs of individual pupils.

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

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

- 2.8 The pupils' personal development is encouraged by the ethos and values of the school which strongly reflect British values. Throughout the school, pupils' development of self-awareness and self-esteem are promoted by means of a range of activities. These include assemblies, public speaking and performance opportunities. Pupils are enabled in their development by the frequent, well-judged praise and critical comment they receive. Pupils develop the ability to distinguish right from wrong and to accept responsibility for their behaviour through contributing to and observing the school's rules. The school's encouragement of openness, a programme of school assemblies and the personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum promote this further. Pupils gain an understanding of law, institutions and democracy through the curriculum, special events, themed days and the effective working of the school councils. The school's promotion of British values strongly encourages mutual respect and tolerance of those with protected characteristics, supported by the international nature of the community. Pupils can take on positions of responsibility in the school and within individual houses. This encourages harmony and understanding of shared commitments. The humanities curriculum and specific other initiatives and events support the development of the pupils' knowledge of other religions and cultures.

- 2.9 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

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

- 2.11 The school makes appropriate arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils, taking account of both UK and local requirements, including in the EYFS. It places appropriate focus on the needs of those pupils with SEND. Policies relating to safeguarding and child protection are suitable and effectively implemented. A regular programme of training at the appropriate level is carried out and recorded for all staff including those with designated safeguarding responsibilities. All new staff receive appropriate induction training. The school maintains regular contact with local and other international welfare agencies as appropriate. The proprietor monitors the implementation of safeguarding procedures appropriately and, together with the principal and other senior staff, undertakes reviews of safeguarding at least termly. Recruitment checking is undertaken with suitable rigor. Detailed records are kept of any child protection concerns. Pupils report that there is always an adult they can talk to if they have a personal difficulty and that the school takes action in response.
- 2.12 An appropriate policy to promote good behaviour is known and understood by pupils and staff. A system of rewards celebrates pupils' successes and achievements, and suitable sanctions are applied when the need arises. Records are kept of all behavioural incidents and these are appropriately monitored in order that trends can be readily identified. The school's policies to prevent bullying, including cyber-bullying, set out clearly the procedures to be followed. These are implemented effectively. Bullying is openly addressed in assemblies, tutor periods and through the PSHE curriculum in both sections of the school. Pupils state that there is very little bullying, including cyber-bullying, and that should any arise it is effectively dealt with by the school. This is confirmed by the relevant records.
- 2.13 The school demonstrates a rigorous approach to health and safety and policies meet local requirements. Responsibilities are clearly set out and training is regularly undertaken by staff. Professional external advice is sought where necessary. Documentation is provided in both English and Romanian as appropriate. Fire and other equipment including electrical appliances and installations are checked regularly and any issues arising are addressed immediately. Hazardous and flammable substances and materials are securely stored. Fire drills, evacuations and lockdown practices are regularly carried out and recorded. The school's comprehensive risk assessment policy takes into account all types of risks, measures to mitigate them and responsibility for related actions. Individual risk assessments for activities both in school and off site are suitably detailed and regularly monitored. Staff receive appropriate guidance and training.
- 2.14 The school's first-aid policy is appropriate. Procedures are known, understood and implemented by staff. First-aid and medical matters are managed by trained personnel and detailed records are maintained. Sufficient first-aid packs are located around the school. Sufficient staff are trained in first-aid, including the required paediatric qualifications for staff in the EYFS and medical support is available at sports matches. Pupils are confident that they are well looked after if unwell or injured. Medicines are stored securely. The school has effective procedures for informing parents if their child is ill or has had an accident. Pupils are appropriately supervised at breaks and lunchtimes, when there is always a visible staff presence and arrangements in the EYFS are appropriate. Mobile phones are used for communication by staff in different locations. The school provides a bus service from the parental car park to the school and children in the EYFS have regular form-time discussions about keeping safe on or near the road outside the school. The admission and attendance registers are appropriately maintained and stored and meet local requirements.

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

- 2.15 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**
- 2.16 The school carries out appropriate checks on staff and governors to ensure their suitability in almost all cases. These include barred list, prohibition, identity, medical fitness, right to work in the host country, qualifications and criminal records checks, including for those staff who have worked overseas. All checks are suitably recorded on a single central register of appointments of all staff and the proprietor.

Part 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.17 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**
- 2.18 Suitable toilet, washing and changing facilities are provided for pupils of all ages and are very well maintained in a clean condition. Appropriate accommodation and facilities are provided for the short-term care of sick and injured pupils and for pupils who are disabled. The buildings are well maintained in good condition and regularly checked to confirm that, so far as is reasonably practical, the health, safety and welfare of pupils, staff and visitors are ensured. Acoustic, sound insulation and lighting conditions are suitable. Suitable drinking water facilities are provided and clearly marked as such. The school carries out regular checks on the temperature of hot water at the point of use. Pupils have suitable outdoor space for physical education and play.

Part 6 – Provision of information

- 2.19 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.**
- 2.20 The school provides to parents, or makes available to them as appropriate, information including contact details for the school, the headmaster and the proprietor, a statement of the school's ethos, and policies and procedures relating to safeguarding, admissions, health and safety, first aid, the promotion of good behaviour, the prevention of bullying and provision for those pupils with SEND and/or EAL. Much of this information, including the school's complaints procedure, is published on the school's website. Written reports are regularly provided to parents about their children's progress and attainment.

Part 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

- 2.21 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.**
- 2.22 The school has an appropriate complaints procedure which is published on its website and is available to parents. This provides for a three-stage process with clear timescales, including an informal initial stage. If concerns are not resolved, parents are able to proceed in writing to a formal stage. If they 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 may 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 complaints received, almost all of which are resolved informally.

Part 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- 2.24 Governance shows sufficient experience and understanding to ensure that the leadership and management of the school demonstrate the good skills and knowledge and fulfilment of responsibilities needed so that the Standards for British Schools Overseas are met consistently and the well-being of pupils is actively promoted.
- 2.25 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. Where the school's own names differ from those used in England, the details are given in the table below:

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
Pre-Nursery	Nursery (Under 3s)

Key findings

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

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

Recommendations

3.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school might wish to consider:

- Enhancing all pupils' understanding of how they can improve still further by ensuring the quality of all marking and assessment matches current best practice.
- Improving the higher level reasoning skills of primary section pupils yet further by ensuring that teachers regularly set challenging tasks in this area.

The quality of the pupils' learning and achievement

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

3.5 Pupils of all ages, abilities and needs show excellent development of knowledge, skills and understanding across all areas of learning and embrace a broad programme of co-curricular activities (CCAs). The school successfully fulfils its aim to provide a comprehensive international education with a strong intellectual foundation. In the pre-inspection questionnaires, almost all parents agreed that the range of subjects is suitable for their child and that they are pleased with their child's progress in learning English. Almost all pupils agree that the school gives them the opportunity to learn and make

good progress and that teachers are supportive and helpful. Inspection evidence from pupils' performance in lessons and in their work supports these views.

- 3.6 In the primary school, many children join the EYFS with little or no English, nor previous experience of school. By the end of Reception, almost all children have achieved all the early learning goals, and all have made excellent progress. They thrive because language development is an initial focus and facilitated through a programme of immersion and targeted EAL support where necessary. Throughout the primary school, support for those entering the school with little or no English continues. By the end of Year 6, all pupils have made excellent progress and achieve above age-related expectations in English and mathematics assessments. These results are confirmed by the observation of lessons, the scrutiny of pupils' work, the high quality of written work seen and from pupil interviews. Pupils with less proficiency in English, and those with SEND, make strong progress because they have regular support lessons either in small groups or individually, as well as in-class support. All pupils are carefully tracked through comprehensive teacher assessment ensuring that pupils with gaps in learning are identified as well as those who would benefit from further stretch and challenge and as a result progress is consistent across different groups of pupils.
- 3.7 Throughout the secondary school, pupils continue to attain at high levels. In GCSE examinations in 2018 and 2019, pupils' results improved considerably from just under half to over 60% of the results being achieved at the highest two grades and almost all pupils achieving at grades A* to C. The centre and teacher-assessed grades awarded in 2020 and 2021 maintained this high level of achievement. In Years 12 and 13, pupils' attainment was consistently high in 2018 and 2019. The centre- and teacher-assessed grades awarded in 2020 and 2021 improved on the proportion of results achieved at A and A* at A level. These results at GCSE and A level represent excellent progress. Regular standardised assessments which inform a rigorous and formalised academic mentoring programme are a significant contributory factor in supporting this progress. In addition to help from form tutors, pupils in Year 11 benefit from help from those in Years 12 and 13. Pupils are most successfully prepared for their public examinations by committed teachers with excellent subject knowledge who are readily available to give their pupils extra help and encouragement when required. The many pupils with EAL make outstanding progress due to an initial intensive programme to develop their skills; the support of the specialist teaching department; and careful setting in groups by proficiency in both written and spoken English. Pupils with SEND make excellent progress in line with their peers as a result of the additional support they receive. Pupils are further supported by committed governance and leadership and a comprehensive range of high-quality resources. Following the recommendation of the previous inspection, marking and assessment has been a regular feature of staff professional development. The school has implemented a series of revisions after a long period of online learning. Not all pupils benefit from the same high level of feedback as seen in the best examples where improvements have been embraced by some trail blazing departments.
- 3.8 Pupils enjoy considerable academic success in and out of the classroom. Pupils returning to schools in the UK have recently won art and music scholarships to secondary schools and in 2021 two pupils have been awarded scholarships to universities in Italy and the UK. Year 13 pupils are offered places to study in universities with very high entry requirements in the European Union, the UK and the USA. All pupils for whom it is relevant pass their English language examinations for non-native English speakers. Pupils engage successfully in a variety of academic, sporting and creative activities which develop their talents in response to the extensive range of CCAs offered. Many such activities are pupil initiated and are run by Year 12 and 13 pupils for their peers and younger colleagues.
- 3.9 Pupils achieve considerable success in a range of endeavours, although many external competitions have been limited over the last two years. For example, pupils in the primary school have been winners in both local and Black Sea's public speaking competitions and have been finalists and achieved special mentions in local mathematics and poetry competitions. In 2019, Year 6 pupils won a local football tournament for female pupils and were bronze medallists in an event for international schools. Year 6 were winners in the event for male pupils and older pupils won an international football tournament.

Secondary school pupils have won international accolades for their innovative work designing and building an electrical vehicle in Project Zephyr in the Innovation Hub; they have also won local national and international debating competitions. They have consistently performed well in UK mathematics competitions winning many gold medals and with several pupils progressing to the next round. Pupils who participate in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme (DofE) regularly achieve gold, silver and bronze awards. Individual students have also had success in a variety of sports, in having books published and writing for a national magazine. In the pre-inspection questionnaires, a small minority of parents disagreed that the school provides a good choice of extra-curricular activities. However, most pupils agreed that they can take part in a range of activities. Inspection evidence shows that a very wide range of opportunities were available considering the recent restrictions on pupil movements. The school reacted swiftly once these were lifted, with more activities now being offered.

- 3.10 Pupils of all ages have outstanding communication skills. These are developed in the EYFS where a wide range of activities promote their speaking and listening, encourage their reading and enable them to acquire early writing skills. In the primary school, written work in pupils' books is of an excellent standard, with a wide variety of tasks that are assessed thoroughly with many helpful comments. Pupils are accomplished readers and readily read aloud complex texts with confidence. Pupils' reading is supported successfully at all ages by attractive and well-stocked libraries. In the secondary school pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, show excellent levels of communication both with their peers and with adults. They use language proficiently and with a maturity beyond their years, such as when debating the most effective coastal defences in Year 8 geography or discussing medical ethics in Year 12 biology. Their confidence develops well through the many opportunities for them to speak in public, including assemblies, speech and drama activities and for the final presentation of their Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) projects. Sixth-form pupils engage in lively debate in Model United Nations and in the debating club, delivering arguments for and against the motion with passionate, well-researched and articulate speeches. Sixth formers have recently launched a pupil-led magazine with a variety of extremely well-written articles, poems and stories. Pupils make excellent use of many opportunities to study other languages and develop fluency in them. In interviews, pupils spoke confidently about their school life, putting forward their ideas in an articulate and assured way, and listening respectfully to others' thoughts and contributions.
- 3.11 Pupils develop excellent mathematical skills and employ them with confidence. Children's numeracy skills are well developed in the EYFS through embedding numeracy across a range of activities, working with small groups and using an excellent range of resources. For example, Reception pupils were using a ruler independently, counting up to 30 whilst measuring the sides of a pirate ship. Older pupils in the primary school apply their numerical skills efficiently, such as when Year 4 pupils changed fractions to decimals fluently. In the secondary school, mathematical skills are developed further with many pupils taking GCSE mathematics in Year 10 with great success, then sitting additional mathematics in Year 11. Written mathematical work shows a broad coverage of the curriculum, although an inconsistent lack of challenge in the primary school hinders progress to an extent. Pupils of all ages apply their mathematical skills with great confidence in a variety of other subjects. In Year 6 science, pupils showed excellent understanding of how to convert between different units of capacity when creating a recipe for a blood cocktail.
- 3.12 Pupils develop strong skills in information and communications technology (ICT), supported by excellent resources. Pupils in the primary school, including the EYFS, have access to suitable software on tablets and devices. They adeptly use online resources to access some lessons. For example, Year 6 pupils carried out research confidently on animals to be found in the Amazonian rainforest. Pupils use their knowledge of coding to programme a range of robotic equipment as well as to write their own programmes both in lessons and in CCA activities. In the secondary school all pupils use online classroom software effortlessly to access learning resources and in the production of their assignments. Use of ICT is an inherent part of pupils' daily school life, as much of their work is undertaken on electronic workbooks. Year 7 pupils have designed their own computer games with considerable skill and imaginative graphics. In design technology lessons and Project Zephyr, pupils

use professional design software to design prototypes for 3D printing. Year 12 pupils have used media software for their EPQ to produce top-quality glossy magazines.

- 3.13 Pupils' study skills are developed extremely successfully as they progress through the school. In the primary school, they develop an understanding of how to quickly record information in note form; for example, in Year 6 English, pupils made notes as they studied non-fiction texts. Pupils analyse information and draw conclusions successfully, such as in science, when Year 5 pupils made hypotheses on how far a spring would stretch when weights were added. However, pupils in the primary schools lack regular opportunities to engage in such higher-order thinking skills in lessons. In line with the recommendation of the previous inspection, enrichment opportunities had been established outside the normal timetable, but these had to be withdrawn while movement of pupils was restricted. In the secondary school, pupils are extremely committed to their studies and show a high level of independence, drawing information for analysis and synthesis from a variety of sources. During the inspection, pupils in Years 7 to 9 presented a range of high-quality projects in a science fair organised by sixth formers. They demonstrated some powerful hypotheses, which were then analysed in the experiments they created and from which they drew well-informed conclusions. Pupils use advanced subject-specific language with accuracy and confidence such as when Year 10 pupils apply sampling techniques in geography.
- 3.14 Pupils' attitudes to learning are outstanding as seen in their excellent behaviour in class and their high aspirations in their studies, activities and charitable work. At all ages, pupils work diligently on both independent and collaborative tasks, co-operating with each other most effectively. In the EYFS and in the primary school, pupils benefit from many opportunities for partner and group work which is consistently embedded in lesson planning. In the secondary school, pupils demonstrate a mature approach and are serious in their intention to learn. In pupil interviews, pupils shared their enthusiasm for their studies as well as for the many opportunities open to them and were warm in their praise of the support given to them by their teachers.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

3.15 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.

- 3.16 Pupils of all ages are self-confident, demonstrating excellent levels of self-awareness and self-esteem. There is a desire amongst pupils to make the most of their education and an understanding that their own endeavours and self-discipline play an important part in this. Pupils' self-understanding is excellent; they are confident yet modest, self-assured yet hard working. The vast majority show a highly mature approach to learning and value the educational opportunities they have been afforded. In the EYFS, children quickly become confident in their new surroundings as they establish excellent relationships with their teachers. They demonstrate resilience; when their model would not stick together, they did not give up but successfully found other resources that would help to achieve this. In the primary school, pupils build up skills of self-reliance and find out confidently what they can do for themselves through discussion and experiment. Pupils with EAL and SEND are well supported by both their peers and by staff and grow in confidence and self-esteem. By the end of Year 6 they are well prepared and enthusiastically look forward to the transition to the secondary school.
- 3.17 Pupils in the secondary school are similarly eager to improve their performance and feel enabled to do this through the excellent teaching and guidance given to them by teachers and older pupils. Pupils in Year 9 were appreciative of the clear guidance they had received on GCSE options and careers. In Years 12 and 13, pupils make the most of the many opportunities available to ready them for university. An innovative programme enables pupils' confidence by going beyond academic choices to include PSHE sessions on, for example, keeping safe in night clubs; more freedoms in school time; and a range of CCAs to encourage independence, such as cooking for yourself. In interviews, pupils were appreciative of this programme that includes access to alumni who share their own experiences and they stated it had helped build their self-reliance.

- 3.18 Pupils are skilful decision-makers. They make decisions in their work, the activities they undertake and the charities they support. In the EYFS, children make clear decisions when choosing from the variety of activities made available to them. In the primary school, pupils make decisions in many lessons, such as a choice of topic or materials in art. They also make effective decisions in selecting their choice of CCA. In the secondary school, these opportunities are broadened and pupils make well-informed and mature decisions about, for example, the use of ICT when taking notes in lessons, and whether or not to attend the academic CCAs available to support their studies. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the impact that the decisions they make will have on their own success and well-being, as well as that of others. This is supported by regular discussions on the qualities of figures who were decisive in their endeavours, such as Emma of Normandy. Many pupils spoke of learning from their mistakes and how school values influence their decision-making. These are promoted very effectively by school leadership and well embedded across the curriculum.
- 3.19 Pupils have excellent spiritual understanding, developed by their exposure to art, music, literature, world religions and philosophy, and psychology. They develop this understanding through aspects of the curriculum. In the EYFS and in the primary school pupils develop their awareness of the natural world through their regular visits to the nearby forest; for example, children in Reception composed their own song inspired by their feelings as they played there. Younger pupils have been most imaginatively introduced to the concept of empathy by a book written and illustrated especially for them in a very carefully researched Year 12 EPQ psychology project. In religious education lessons, pupils study broader spiritual themes and discuss issues knowledgeably, such as their belief in the afterlife. Opportunities for reflection are embedded in many lessons. Year 6 pupils contemplated the suffering caused by conflict with integrity as they studied the memorial stones of young soldiers in a local war memorial.
- 3.20 Pupils have an excellent sense of right and wrong, under-pinned by well-known and understood school values and inspired by the fairness and kindness of their teachers. In the questionnaires, the vast majority of parents and pupils agreed that the school encourages them to behave well. Inspection evidence shows that pupils of all ages are extremely well behaved, understanding that poor behaviour is not acceptable. In the EYFS and in the primary school, pupils understand the part they have to play in contributing towards a happy school. They understand and respect systems of rules and laws, and accept responsibility for their own behaviour, including towards others, encouraged by constant reinforcement of these attitudes. Year 3 pupils showed excellent self-awareness of the impact of an act of unkindness, skilfully managed with reference to the school values. Pupils in the secondary school have a strong sense of personal responsibility and this informs their own behaviour in school, their work ethic and their relationship with their peers and their teachers. Year 12 and 13 pupils spoke most favourably of the behavioural guidance they received when they were younger and how now staff treat them as equals, which they respect.
- 3.21 The pupils show outstanding social development and collaboration in their care for each other, their sense of responsibility and their willingness to work with others to achieve progress and overcome problems. Pupils collaborating effectively together towards common goals is a notable feature of many lessons and activities. In discussions, pupils listen respectfully to the views of others, before sharing their own opinions and ideas. In a Year 7 PSHE lesson, pupils discussed problems associated with puberty with respect and without embarrassment. Pupils new to the school comment favourably on how the school is very welcoming and others explain how there is an inclusive environment, where no one is judged. This sentiment was observed in a Year 11 lesson, when pupils composed and then sang their own melody with confidence and with no sense of awkwardness or criticism. Pupils in Year 12 and 13 contribute greatly to the social development of their younger colleagues through the CCAs they run. They also have many other opportunities to work together most successfully such as designing projects in the innovation hub.
- 3.22 The pupils have an excellent record of contribution to others as part of the school community and beyond. This is demonstrated by their outstanding work for charities, coordinated by their 'Make a

Difference' group and supported by an active staff and parent body. A number of primary school girls, of their own volition, had their haircut in an assembly, to be used in wigs for cancer victims. Pupils rally to the call to help others, and are actively assisted in their initiatives by the staff, for example in support for Ukrainian families. Pupils readily embrace the many opportunities provided across the school to have positions of responsibility. They take such positions seriously and fulfil them well. They report back to staff when they feel change is needed and feel that their ideas are listened to. For example, in primary school council, pupils decided that they would benefit from drama lessons in Year 3 to 6, and these have now been introduced. Pupils in the secondary school have been involved in leadership events and organised a most successful online student conference. Older pupils are also committed to the idea of helping younger children, such as when older pupils hear younger children read.

- 3.23 Pupils demonstrate an ethos of tolerance and respect in an environment where a wide variety of cultural backgrounds is represented. This is evident from excellent relationships amongst all pupils and widely supported school values. In the questionnaires, almost all parents and pupils agreed that the school encourages respect for others and tolerance of people with different faiths and beliefs. Inspection evidence shows that at all ages there is a strong sense of mutual respect and courtesy. In English, Year 2 pupils discussed showing tolerance, sensitivity and appreciation of those from other cultures when they wrote invitations inviting them to a party. In drama, Year 11 pupils developed their awareness of racial tensions as they acted out the parts in a carefully chosen script about apartheid. Pupils show interest and curiosity when learning about different faiths and cultures, for example in a Year 7 discussion about Catholicism and purgatory. In interviews, pupils asserted strongly that pupils at the school are always accepting of differences in others. They feel that the school encourages this by being inclusive and welcoming to all. Pupils showed great maturity as they explained that respect goes beyond faith or culture, discussing it in the context of vaccination or decisions about wearing a face mask.
- 3.24 Pupils of all ages have an excellent awareness of how to stay safe and healthy. Pupils agree that the school provides a safe and healthy environment and this was confirmed by inspection evidence. In the EYFS and the primary school, pupils acquire an excellent understanding of healthy food through their food technology lessons. Visits to the forest embed their understanding of the need always to consider health and safety before they embark on new activities, such as using a saw to cut logs. Pupils of all ages are very confident that they know how to stay safe online and they show respect for the health and safety rules in design technology and science. They learn effectively about the need for a healthy lifestyle in physical education, PSHE and science. Year 3 pupils actively discussed what activities might be considered safe or dangerous and made posters giving guidance on how to keep yourselves safe. Pupils choose to enjoy the healthy snacks made available during break times and make informed choices at lunch time. They have relished the return to a broader variety of team sports now restrictions have been lifted. Pupils are also aware of the need to look after their own mental health and be aware of the needs of others. In this they are supported by sensitive discussions on topics in PSHE, for example Year 12 and 13 pupils discussed with care how to recognise depression and anxiety in a friend. Committed and responsible governance and leadership take the well-being of the pupils very seriously and have provided increased access to professional school counsellors.

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 proprietor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and assembly. 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

Mrs Serena Alexander	Reporting inspector
Mrs Jeanette Adams	Team inspector (Former deputy head, IAPS school, UK)
Mr Patrick Wenham	Team inspector (Former head, IAPS school, UK)
Mr Marcus Wild	Team inspector (Assistant head, BSO school, Spain)
Mr Andrew Williams	Team inspector (Head, HMC school, UK)